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ABSTRACT

Based on a study undertaken for a conference on the implications of California's increasing ethnic and racial diversity for the state's public libraries, this paper was prepared to serve as a background paper for the conference and provide a context for the conferees' deliberations. The first of eight sections describes an analytical study that considers whether a problem exists and if there are barriers to minorities, and describes the research methodology. The second section summarizes the methodology, including the analytical framework used to examine how libraries work, and the third section provides background information on public libraries in California today. The fourth section provides a profile of the state's ethnic and racial composition in 1985 and in 2000 in relation to public libraries. Sections 5 and 6 assess libraries' adaptation policies vis-a-vis the communities' characteristics and the systematic obstacles that libraries face when they attempt to adapt to diversity. Responses to these obstacles are suggested in the seventh section, and the eighth poses questions about the ways in which libraries serve California's racially and ethnically diverse public. Three appendixes include: (1) ethnic and racial profiles of California counties, 1985-2000; (2) a list of members of the study committee; and (3) maps showing the distribution of minority groups. (122 references) (CGD)

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Public Libraries Face California's Ethnic and Racial Diversity

Judith Payne

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Public Libraries Face California's Ethnic and Racial Diversity

Judith Payne
With Martha Samulon, Peter Morrison,
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May 1988

Prepared for the
Stanford University Libraries
With a Grant from the California State Library

40 Years
1948-1988

RAND

PREFACE

California's population is becoming increasingly diverse ethnically and racially—a challenge to all public services, including libraries. The California State Library is conducting a conference in May 1988 to consider the implications of this diversity for all libraries in the state: public, academic, and special libraries. The conferees will include senior librarians, educators, elected officials, community leaders, and representatives of the private sector.

This report results from a study undertaken for the conference's planning committee to set the context for the conferees' deliberations. It describes public libraries in California today and the state's present and future ethnic and racial composition. It analyzes the implications of growing ethnic and racial diversity for libraries and the systematic obstacles libraries face when responding to diversity. The report also suggests strategies for overcoming these obstacles and poses questions for conferees. It focuses on public libraries, not academic or special libraries.

In addition to the conference participants, this report should be useful to librarians, elected officials, community leaders, and policymakers who serve communities becoming increasingly ethnically and racially diverse.

The study was sponsored in full by the U.S. Department of Education under provisions of the Federal Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), administered in California by the State Librarian. Stanford University served as fiscal agent.

SUMMARY

California's population is undergoing a major and long-term diversification in racial and ethnic makeup. In 1988, 40 percent of the state's population was composed of several minority groups.[1] By 2000, this figure is projected to increase to 48 percent. Many public libraries have responded to this change by adapting their services and collections. Yet representatives of the library profession in the nation and in California report that there are fewer minorities among public library users and the general population. This disparity concerns these groups because of the public library's mission to provide free and convenient access to its services and collection to all Californians as a source of education and information.

Because of these concerns, the California State Library is convening a conference in May, 1988, of librarians, elected officials, community leaders, and educators, to examine how libraries can better respond to increasing ethnic and racial diversity. This report is intended as background material for the conferees. It provides the context for their deliberations and helps frame the key questions for them to address.

IS THERE A PROBLEM?

We looked first for evidence of the growing disparity between the general population and library users that concerns many librarians. A measure of the disparity would help librarians understand better the nature of the disparity, whether it was a cause for concern, and, if so, how it might be most effectively addressed.

Because library use is voluntary, a disparity between users and the general population would not necessarily constitute a cause for concern. It would be troublesome only if all individuals did not have equal access to the benefits of the library and the information needed to make an informed choice about whether or not to use a library. The disparity could simply be the result of individuals' informed choices if two conditions were met: there were no barriers to access—physical, temporal, psychological, geographic, educational—which affected individuals in minority groups more than others; and there were no barriers to information—that is, individuals in minority groups were as likely as others to find what they wanted from public libraries within the libraries' mission.

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[1] We will use the term "minority" to refer to Hispanics and all racial groups other than non-Hispanic whites: blacks, Asians, American Indians, and other ethnic and racial groups. We include Hispanics in this measure, an ethnic group not a race, because of their large representation in California.

Therefore, we looked for systematic empirical evidence of barriers to public library access to minorities, but learned there was none. We did learn that few elected officials and community members were voicing dissatisfaction with libraries.

We faced an apparent paradox: The librarians' concerns were strong and continuing regarding the disparity between library users and the population, but (1) we found no systematic empirical evidence available of the disparity, and (2) generally, leaders of the communities served by the state's public libraries were not complaining. Was there indeed a problem for the conference to address?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND APPROACH

Given this context, we sought answers to five questions:

1. What is known about public libraries in California today?
2. What is the state's ethnic and racial composition, and how do socioeconomic and other characteristics relevant to library use vary by minority group?
3. Do libraries need to adapt to growing diversity?
4. If a library needs to adapt, what obstacles does it face?
5. What actions will facilitate change where it is needed?

To answer these questions, we conducted a literature review and analyzed available data sources. We developed an ethnic and racial profile of the state for the 1980s and 2000, based on projections by the State Department of Finance and supplemented by projections of county racial and ethnic composition from the Center for the Continuing Study of the California Economy. We also examined minority group characteristics relevant to libraries. We conducted structured interviews with over 50 persons, including public librarians as well as other types of librarians, community leaders, policymakers, educators, and elected officials. Finally, we performed confidential case studies of six representative public libraries. We did not collect data to determine the racial and ethnic characteristics of current users of California's public libraries nor did we attempt to measure barriers for minorities to library services. This then is a study of (a) the changing demographics of libraries' potential clientele and (b) perceptions of problems and opportunities in serving this new clientele.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN CALIFORNIA TODAY

We learned that the public library's mission is to provide equal access to all individuals to learn and find information and inspiration. It calls for public libraries to address problems of access barriers. This emphasis on accessibility is stressed in state law and state library plans.

ETHNIC AND RACIAL PROFILE OF CALIFORNIA

California's three largest minorities—Hispanic, Asian/other, and black—are projected to make up 48 percent of the state's population by the year 2000, compared with 40 percent in 1988. The state's current and future racial and ethnic diversity is most pronounced at preadult ages, particularly those of school age. For example, by the year 2000, Hispanics are projected to be 29 percent of all Californians, but 39 percent of those under age 20. The degree and character of diversity will vary by location; some counties are already more diverse than others are projected to be by 2000. The rapidity of change and the particular racial group involved will vary even more dramatically at the municipal and neighborhood level, as it does now.

The state's largest minority groups have different socioeconomic profiles. Hispanics had lower education levels than the other minority groups and the highest high school noncompletion rates in 1980. Asians had the highest median income and education levels of the minority groups and were least likely to be unemployed. These characteristics vary by specific racial group, by age, by community, and across time.

The minorities also vary in other characteristics shaped by race and ethnicity: their desire to maintain their cultural identities; their cultural traditions toward reading, libraries, and government; and language proficiency.

DO LIBRARIES NEED TO ADAPT TO MEET GROWING DIVERSITY?

To answer whether libraries need to adapt, we posed six subquestions. The answers are given below to the extent possible given limited data.

Who Uses Public Libraries and Why?

No statewide data are available on who uses public libraries in California. Nationally, those who choose to use public libraries have been found to be a minority of the population in study after study: well-educated, younger, and more affluent than the general population. Users are more likely to be white, but race does not appear to be a good predictor of library usage. Education is the strongest predictor. Studies show that low-income minorities are more likely than other users to use public libraries for education, rather than recreation. Low-income children are more likely to use libraries than their parents. Asians are somewhat more likely to turn to libraries to answer questions; blacks and Hispanics, are least likely.

What Does Ethnic and Racial Diversity Mean for Public Libraries?

A library needs to know more than the race and ethnicity of the population it serves so it can evaluate what diversity means for it. What ethnic and racial diversity means for individual public libraries will depend more on the associated socioeconomic characteristics, cultural traditions, desires for cultural identity, and language proficiency of the particular minority groups it serves.

Even at the state level, the minority groups in the demographic analysis differ considerably in their socioeconomic characteristics. Cultural traditions toward reading, libraries, educational achievement, and government may affect whether the public library is perceived as useful, is actually used, and how it is used. These factors can vary by ethnicity and within racial categories. Also, a minority individual's desire to maintain cultural identity or assimilate culturally may affect what information he or she wants from the public library. Finally, language proficiency, which varies within racial categories, also may affect if and how an individual uses a library.

How Will Libraries Know If They Need to Change?

Based on what is known about the state's minorities and who and why people use libraries, we suggest five sets of questions to help libraries determine if minorities in their communities face obstacles to library use. First, what are the community's socioeconomic characteristics, such as educational achievement, age distribution, family patterns, and employment characteristics? How are these characteristics changing? How do they vary across age groups, across time, and across the library's service area?

Second, what are the cultural characteristics of the community's residents? How strong is their desire to maintain their cultural identity, assimilate culturally, or maintain proficiency in their native language? What are their cultural traditions toward reading, government, and libraries? In our case studies and interviews, we found this second set of questions is rarely asked and is much more difficult to answer than the first set, although it appears to be at least as important in helping libraries determine how community residents may want to use the library. An individual's cultural traditions may affect whether he or she understands what libraries can offer well enough to ask for library services or to make an informed choice not to use a library.

Third, how well do the community's residents speak English? Do they rely on English as their primary language? How does this vary by age, location, or other characteristics?

Fourth, given the answers to these questions, what barriers to library use—temporal, geographic, cultural, psychological, educational—do minorities in the community face? To help libraries identify such barriers, we developed a framework with two dimensions: service and information. By "service," we mean what services a library provides and how the community is informed about them. By "information," we mean the information an individual wants from a library, if he or she chooses to use it. There can be barriers to public library use along both dimensions.

The final set of questions deals with what roles the library plays for its community's residents. Once a community's residents are informed of the public library's purpose and the many ways it can serve its community, what do residents want from their public library? This cannot be determined by the library based only on the answers to the above questions. The process calls for involving in some way the entire community, not current library users alone. Given the changing profile of so many California communities, we suggest that public libraries in California emphasize two questions in this role-setting process: Do the service delivery models now being used need to change? May individuals—"minority" or otherwise—even in communities that are fairly homogeneous racially and ethnically, want different information and services from libraries, because of the state's growing ethnic and racial diversity?

Do Libraries Need to Change?

Because we did not collect statistical evidence of whether barriers to access to public libraries exist, we cannot draw general conclusions about whether libraries need to change. Based on our interviews and case studies, there is a clear perception that change is necessary. It appears that in some communities there are indeed barriers to public libraries for particular minorities, both *service* and *information* barriers. The most important access barrier appears to be the way many libraries present their services and information to users: a way that makes it difficult for inexperienced users to find what they want and gain the full benefits of library use. Those without cultural traditions for library use are particularly affected by this access barrier. We also observed in two of the case study libraries that barriers to access exist due to lack of English language proficiency. These barriers were not erected by libraries; yet libraries need to adapt to become accessible to all.

If a Library Needs to Change, In What Ways?

If a library finds minorities in its community face barriers to access, it will need to reduce those barriers. Even if two communities had similar socioeconomic and demographic profiles, their libraries may need to change in different ways, depending on local residents' preferences. Therefore, it is impossible to provide a single approach to adaptation—many approaches may work. We developed an example of how a hypothetical library might respond to particular ethnic and racial changes in its community by changing the services and information it provides. For example, because more minorities are younger, the hypothetical library increases its services to young adults and children. It keeps close track of any new waves of immigrants. Because it learns many community residents aren't familiar with libraries, it concentrates on services to new users and on informing the community of how a library can help. Among other adjustments to its collection, it adds information new immigrants want on community services and citizenship. Because it learns many minority residents want to maintain their cultural identity, its staff learns more about their cultures and adds books throughout the collection to reflect them.

Have Libraries Needing to Change Done So?

Some libraries have made changes to services and collections in response to increasing racial and ethnic diversity. Five of our six cases had made explicit efforts to adapt to ethnic and racial diversity in their communities. Each had experimented with different changes to service and information, some of which were eventually stopped and a few of which were made permanent. Interviewees outside of our case libraries also cited many examples of libraries' attempts to adapt, most often adding non-English materials to collections or efforts to hire minority staff. Few libraries appear to make changes to direct user services, staff training, performance reviews, or staffing patterns.

Many interviewees reported a concern that some libraries have not adapted sufficiently as their communities became more racially and ethnically diverse. For example, several interviewees described libraries' slow progress at hiring minority librarians or expanding their non-English collections.

Other interviewees questioned whether a library should adapt to serve new users, when it could not meet all of the requests of its current users. Two case libraries, both county public libraries, reported having especially difficult finanical challenges, making it difficult to focus on growing diversity in its long list of unmet demands.

FACTORS AFFECTING ADAPTATION

Based on our interviews, it appears that libraries try to respond to requests for change from users, nonusers, or elected officials. But we found that elected officials and minority community members rarely pressure libraries to change. Local- and state-elected officials generally report satisfaction with public libraries. It appears that even minority groups and individuals themselves rarely call for libraries to change or turn to their elected officials to ask for changes. No external pressure to change may mean a library does not need to adapt to fulfill its mission. But it may also mean that all community members may not know enough about a library's potential uses and benefits to recognize the potential gains from various changes. Thus, a library may still need to change even if its community is not asking for change.

Even if a public library needs to change in response to its community's growing ethnic and racial diversity and decides to change, five major obstacles appear to hamper it.

Libraries' Many Roles. Libraries play many roles for their users, rarely explicitly defined or ranked by priority. The result is that many libraries today are overloaded with a range of services and collection interests, each appreciated by some users. This overextension reduces the flexibility needed to change. Furthermore, interviewees reported that a public library sometimes sees adaptation to diversity as a new role, rather than an integral part of all of its roles. When so viewed, some argue against adaptation, asserting that the library cannot take on new roles when it cannot manage well its current roles with its limited resources.

Organizational Change Is Difficult. Adaptation requires reorienting services and information to users who may be unlike the library's traditional users; this process of organizational change is difficult. Also, according to interviewees, libraries sometimes do not know how best to change: what to change (e.g., roles, collections, staffing, services), what works, what doesn't, who has information on successful approaches. Such information and tools are available, but many libraries do not know about them and even fewer use them. Change also means making tradeoffs between old and new services and collection emphases. Libraries trying to change must determine how to balance the demands of current users with those of potential users.

No Major New Resources. Changing is much easier to do by adding resources than by reallocating existing resources. But, although the median public library's real per capita operating expenditures steadily increased over the past five years, its real per capita operating expenditures remain below its pre-Proposition 13 level. Worse, although California's municipalities managed to return their total real per capita expenditures to pre-Proposition 13 levels by 1985, they chose to spread them differently across services; libraries suffered.

Scarce Materials and Expertise. Although some interviewees disagreed, others reported that materials needed for adaptation were scarce. All agreed it is more difficult to acquire non-English materials through the major, "full-service" vendors libraries typically use. Minority librarians and others with skills and experience to select and catalogue non-English materials and understand diverse cultures are also scarce.

Measuring Success. According to our case studies, libraries attempting to adapt find it difficult to know when they have succeeded. There are methods to measure success and the absence of barriers to access, but they take significant time and resources, and interviewees reported that few libraries choose to use their resources in this way. Hence, it appears that few libraries know if they are adapting successfully.

ACTIONS TO FACILITATE CHANGE

For libraries needing to adapt but facing obstacles described above, we identified five sets of actions to facilitate change.

Engage Communities. To determine if and how a library needs to change and gain the support needed to make changes, it can work with representatives of its entire community to determine what the community wants, how to translate its mission into roles within its limited resources, and how to make the hard tradeoffs needed.

Clarify and Limit Roles. Once it has engaged its community, the public library will probably need to clarify and limit its roles and develop measurable goals and deadlines for reaching them. The public library cannot provide all services the public wants and do so well. The library can resist roles and actions inappropriate to its mission by keeping its mission in focus when choosing roles. Given the characteristics of California's growing minorities and the library's mission, many libraries may choose to emphasize roles related to students, young and old, such as study centers for children and adolescents.

Focus on Service. Because one of the primary access barriers we observed was caused by a lack of cultural traditions to use libraries, libraries adapting to diversity are likely to need to change how they deliver services. If a library finds nonusers face such an access barrier, they will need to inform their community better of how a library may be useful and accommodate the inexperienced or new user.

Measure, Evaluate Performance, and Act. Public libraries will need practical ways to monitor performance against goals and evaluate results, demonstrating benefits where possible. As must any well-managed organization, libraries will then need to act on what they learn, stopping ineffective services, not just attempting to improve them, and de-emphasizing inappropriate subcollections. Such rigor will need to be applied to new as well as old programs and collections.

Work with Other Libraries and Organizations. Public libraries already work together, with other types of libraries, other organizations, and with the state to provide services, support each other, and develop and manage their collections. Increasing ethnic and racial diversity adds more reasons to do so. According to interviewees, most existing cooperative efforts do not directly address ethnic and racial diversity.

It may be especially useful for public libraries to develop directly with other public libraries, one-on-one or in groups. They can also work with public schools and universities to improve services to their diverse communities. Currently, linkages with universities appear especially weak but could help public libraries better understand demographic trends and cultural traditions of particular minorities.

Public libraries can also develop stronger ties to other public and private organizations and the public media to inform community residents of the library's potential benefits and understand what community members are most likely to want from libraries.

The state already supports linkages between public libraries in various ways. We suggest several ways for the state to help libraries adapt to racial and ethnic diversity, including helping libraries define appropriate roles with measurable goals and alternative service models, and facilitating direct links between experienced libraries and others so scarce materials and expertise can be shared.

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

To conclude, we pose seven sets of questions to the conferees, summarized here:

1. Does the public library's broad mission need to be reaffirmed or revised, given the state's growing ethnic and racial diversity?
2. How can each local library measure whether minorities in its community face access barriers to library use?
3. What can libraries do to engage their total constituency in setting objectives and choosing roles and service emphases?
4. What can community members (nonusers and users, elected officials, policymakers, and others interested in libraries) do to let libraries know the roles they wish them to play?
5. What are the costs and benefits of changes in response to ethnic and racial diversity?
6. How should libraries define "success" in serving pluralistic communities?
7. How can libraries in California work together to serve their diverse constituencies more cost effectively?

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We thank colleagues at RAND for their assistance. Adnan Rahman prepared statewide public library statistics for analysis. Lorraine McDonnell helped analyze the public libraries' relation to public education. Anthony Pascal, David Lyon, and Vivian Arterbery provided helpful comments and suggestions. Arabella Martinez and David Carlson of the Center for Policy Development served as advisers for the study.

We express our appreciation to the members of the California State Library Ethnic Services Conference Planning Committee and especially the committee's co-chairs, Yolanda J. Cuesta and Roberto G. Trujillo, for their cooperation and assistance in this research. The full committee is listed in Appendix B. We also thank California State Librarian Gary Strong and David C. Weber, Director, Stanford University Libraries, for reviewing the report. Further, we are grateful for the generous contributions of time and insights provided by the staffs and community members at the six confidential public library case sites examined in the study and the many librarians, elected officials, community leaders, and policymakers interviewed for the study.

James Kahan and Stephen Carroll of RAND reviewed the report. Their comments are gratefully appreciated. Finally, special thanks are due to Gary Reid, University of Southern California, for his insights and suggestions throughout the project. Of course, we alone are responsible for the content of the report.

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I. INTRODUCTION

California's population is undergoing a major and long-term diversification in racial and ethnic makeup. In 1988, 40 percent of the state's population was composed of several minority groups.[1] This figure is projected to increase to 48 percent by 2000. Many public libraries have responded to this change by adapting their services and collections. Yet representatives of the library profession in the nation and in California report a growing disparity between the diversity of public library users and the general population.[2] This disparity is a concern because of the public library's mission to provide free and convenient access to its services and collection to all Californians as a source of education and information.[3]

The California State Library is convening a conference in San Diego, May 25–27, 1988, of librarians, elected officials, community leaders, and educators, to examine how libraries can better respond to increasing ethnic and racial diversity. This report is intended as background material for the conferees. It provides the context for their deliberations and helps frame the key questions for them to address.[4]

IS THERE A PROBLEM?

To begin our analysis, we looked first for evidence of the growing disparity between the general population and library users. A measure of the disparity would help librarians understand better the nature of the disparity, whether it was a cause for concern, and, if so, how it might be most effectively addressed. Because library use is voluntary, a disparity between users and the general population would not necessarily constitute a cause for concern. It would be troublesome only if all individuals did not have equal access to the benefits of the library and the information needed to make an informed choice about whether or not to use a library. The disparity could simply be the result of individuals' informed choices if:

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[1] We will use the term "minority" to refer to Hispanics and all racial groups other than non-Hispanic whites: blacks, Asians, American Indians, and other ethnic and racial groups. We include Hispanics in this measure, an ethnic group not a race, because of their large representation in California. This measure, "percentage minority," can be misleading as a measure of ethnic and racial diversity, because it does not reflect the diverse groups within the population, but only two categories: majority and minority. A more complex measure of diversity is described in Sec. IV.

[2] See President's Committee on Library Services to Minorities, 1985, for concern at the national level and New Majority Coalition, 1987, for concern at the state level.

[3] State of California Education Code, Section 19300.

[4] Although the conference addresses all types of libraries—public, academic, and special—the analysis summarized in this report was limited to public libraries, because they account for 84 percent of all library circulation in the state (California State Library, 1987a).

- There were no barriers to access—physical, temporal, psychological, geographic, educational—that affected individuals in minority groups more than others
- There were no barriers to information—that is, individuals in minority groups were as likely as others to find what they wanted from public libraries within the libraries' mission

The disparity would be troublesome if such barriers existed. Therefore, to define whether libraries need to change in response to diversity, we looked for measures of barriers to minorities in public library access.

ARE THERE BARRIERS TO MINORITIES?

There is no measure available of the ethnic and racial profile of public library users in California nor any systematic measures of barriers to library services for minorities. There is evidence that libraries have historically served a minority of the population, predominantly non-Hispanic white and well-educated,[5] but we have no recent confirmation of this pattern for California. Further, we learned that few elected officials and community members were voicing dissatisfaction with libraries.

We faced an apparent paradox: the librarians' concerns were strong and continuing regarding the disparity between library users and the population, but (1) there was no empirical evidence of the disparity available, and (2) generally, leaders of the communities served by the state's public libraries were not complaining.

Was there indeed a problem for the conference to address? To help conferees answer this question and understand the implications of the growing diversity for public libraries, we analyzed what barriers might prevent equal access to minority individuals and whether these barriers actually exist.

Libraries are public agencies and must be measured against their purpose, not solely by whether community leaders are satisfied with them. If barriers to service are a function of the characteristics of the state's growing ethnic and racial diversity, then such diversity does call for libraries to adapt.

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[5] L. White, 1983, pp. 29-43. See footnote 1 on p. 32.

QUESTIONS POSED

Given this context, we sought answers to five questions to aid conferees:

1. What do we know about public libraries in California today? We examined the public libraries' mission and roles in their communities.

2. What is the state's ethnic and racial composition? We examined the state's current ethnic and racial diversity by county and how it is projected to increase by the year 2000. We also evaluated socioeconomic, cultural, and other minority group characteristics relevant to library usage.

3. Do libraries need to adapt due to growing diversity? Based on what we learned about the state's growing diversity, we looked more closely at how these demographic changes might affect accessibility to public libraries and information demands of minority Californians. First, we analyzed what is known about who uses the state's public libraries and why. We then identified types of barriers minorities are likely to face and what characteristics of these minorities might influence how they use libraries. We considered ways a particular library might determine if it needed to adapt to increasing diversity in its community. Further, we suggest various ways it might adapt, based on what is known about why people use libraries.

We did not collect statistical evidence of whether barriers to access to public libraries exist for particular minorities or whether libraries now provide what minority residents in their communities may want from the library. Based on our limited observations, interviews, and case studies, it appears that in some communities there are barriers for particular minorities. We have no systematic measures of which communities these are, so we do not know which libraries need to adapt to eliminate access barriers, the extent of these barriers, or whether the libraries have adapted or recognize the need to do so. Based on what we could learn, it appears that some libraries in racially and ethnically diverse communities have adapted; others have not. The latter may not have adapted for a variety of reasons: (1) they may not need to adapt given their particular community's characteristics, (2) they may not have evaluated whether they need to adapt, or (3) they may face obstacles that make it difficult to adapt. Our fourth question focused on these obstacles.

4. If a library needs to adapt, what obstacles does it face? For those libraries trying to adapt or needing to adapt to eliminate access barriers for particular minorities, we identified systematic obstacles to adaptation. We focused particularly on obstacles inherent in the processes libraries use to fulfill their mission. These obstacles hamper libraries now and will challenge libraries even more as ethnic and racial diversity grows.

5. What actions will facilitate change where it is needed? We analyzed ways that libraries can overcome the obstacles to change that we identified, working alone, with other public libraries, with other types of libraries, and with their communities.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

In the following sections, we discuss our research approach and present the results of our study. Section II summarizes our methodology including the analytical framework we used to examine how libraries work. Section III provides background information on public libraries in California today. Section IV provides a profile of the state's ethnic and racial composition in 1985 and 2000 relevant to public libraries. Section V assesses whether libraries need to adapt, how they can determine if they need to do so, and ways they may need to adapt, given their communities' characteristics. Section VI assesses the systematic obstacles libraries face when they attempt to adapt to diversity, and Sec. VII describes suggested responses to these obstacles. Finally, in Sec. VIII, we pose questions based on our analysis for conferees to address.

Appendix A provides the population's current and future ethnic and racial composition by county in California. Appendix B lists the members of the California State Library Ethnic Services Conference Study Committee, who served as advisers to the project. Appendix C provides maps showing the geographic distribution of the state's minority groups.

II. STUDY APPROACH

To answer the questions we posed in our study (presented in Sec. I), we developed an analytical framework to examine how public libraries function and conducted five research tasks. This section describes our research methodology and this analytical framework.

METHODOLOGY

We completed the following research tasks to conduct our analysis.

- Review of literature and secondary data sources
- Ethnic and racial profile of the state
- Structured interviews
- Confidential case studies

We describe each task below.

Review of Literature and Secondary Data Sources. We reviewed relevant published material in the fields of public policy analysis, public finance, library and information science, political science, and education. We list these in the Bibliography. We also analyzed available financial and public library activity and usage data from the California State Library.[1] Finally, we reviewed data on minority participation in the electoral process.[2]

We did not collect sufficient data for statistical analysis to determine the racial and ethnic characteristics of current users of California's public libraries or to measure barriers for minorities to library services.

Ethnic and Racial Profile of the State. We developed an ethnic and racial profile of the state for 1985 and 2000, statewide and at the county level. We used population projections at these levels provided by the State Department of Finance.[3] For the ethnic and racial distribution of these projections at the state level, we used the same source. For the ethnic and racial distribution at the county level, we relied on unpublished projections from the Center for the Continuing Study of the California Economy.[4] We used the 1980 U.S. Census for data on American Indians to evaluate minority groups' characteristics relevant to libraries.

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[1] Crockett, 1979; California State Library, 1982, 1986, 1987a.

[2] The Field Institute, 1982, 1987; Cain and Kiewiet, 1986.

[3] Population Research Unit, February 1988.

Structured Interviews. We conducted structured interviews with over 50 persons. They include public, academic, and special librarians; community leaders; policymakers; educators; and elected officials at the state and local level. The interview instruments were designed to collect factual information as well as the interviewees' assessments of trends and future policy directions. The instruments followed our analytical framework for libraries described below and solicited information on the interviewees' experience with and perceptions of library services to minorities.

Confidential Case Studies. We conducted case studies of six varied public libraries. We selected the six to include libraries:

- In both urban and rural settings
- Serving different degrees and characters of ethnic and racial diversity
- Operating as county and city agencies
- With varying per capita resources
- Different-sized populations
- In different regions of the state

We used three methods to collect information at each case site: interviews, analysis of written documents, and observations. We interviewed representatives of the library staff responsible for or involved in the five library processes in our analytical framework. We also interviewed representatives of the relevant county or city government, elected officials overseeing the library's budget, and members of the minority community.

We analyzed written materials at each case site including trends in funding, current budgets, activity levels, estimates of the service area's demographic profile, needs assessments, plans, evaluations, and various policies and procedures.

We observed service delivery at several locations and times of day at each case site. Though subjective, such observations proved valuable in developing our understanding of how services are actually delivered.

We chose to keep the case sites confidential in order to encourage our case interviewees to be as candid as possible when discussing if their libraries perceived a need to adapt to ethnic and racial diversity, and, if so, how they were trying to do so and what obstacles they faced.

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[4] Unpublished projections of California counties, 1985 and 2000, by racial and ethnic groups (non-Hispanic white, Hispanic, black, Asian and other), The Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1987.

A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYZING PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Throughout the study, we used an analytical framework to analyze how public libraries serve their communities and to structure our questions to interviewees. We developed the framework to help us identify what types of barriers might hamper minorities' access to public libraries and what systematic obstacles libraries might face when trying to eliminate any barriers. The framework breaks down what libraries do into five processes:

- Planning and evaluation
- Allocating resources
- Transforming financial resources into library resources
- Delivering services
- Maintaining links with other libraries and information services

Below we describe each process and the questions we posed as we examined them.

The Library Planning and Evaluation Process. A library's planning and evaluation process includes defining and periodically reexamining its mission and roles, assessing community needs, determining a plan for resource development and service delivery, and evaluating actions against plans. The process a library uses for planning is affected by many factors, including professional planning standards and models, state reporting requirements, and its own traditions. The particular planning process used can, in turn, affect what questions are asked during the process. For example, if a library's process involves only library users and staff, it may result in a plan quite different from one involving representatives of the entire community. During our interviews and case studies, we asked the following questions: Who is involved in the process: users, nonusers, community leaders? How are they involved and how often? How often does the library conduct a planning process and reexamine its mission? Is it translated into measurable goals and objectives and, if so, how? How are a library's roles set? Are community needs measured in any way—the needs of users and nonusers? How does the library monitor performance? How is the planning process linked to resource allocation and service delivery processes?

The Resource Allocation Process. Two related resource allocation processes affect libraries: the process external to the library of appropriating government funds to libraries and the internal library process of allocating resources by function or geographical unit. How each process works can affect a library's ability to serve a diverse population. For example, if local governments—public libraries' major source of funds—face pressures to decrease their expenditures, how do libraries fare? We know that after Proposition 13 libraries at first suffered significant cutbacks.[5] We evaluated how libraries are now faring in the local government resource allocation process. How do decision-makers view the library when making tradeoffs between public agency budget requests?

We also analyzed varying characteristics of the public library's internal resource allocation. How does a library allocate resources among branches, to collection development, to automated information systems, to outreach efforts, and to special services and programs? How is the variability of community profiles across branches reflected in the allocation process? Do branches themselves have discretion over any funds?

Translating Financial Resources into Library Resources. Once a library allocates its budget across broad categories, it decides how to use its funds for library resources, primarily its collection, staff, and facilities. What internal policies and procedures does it use? For example, how are staff selected, trained, and promoted? What standards are used to develop collections? Do these standards change to reflect community needs and, if so, how? Are libraries constrained by staff skills and experience or the availability of appropriate materials from reliable sources?

The Service Delivery Process. Libraries deliver services in many ways. We examined ways public libraries inform their potential users about their services and how to use them. What barriers separate the nonusers from the library? What has been tried, how long, and how consistently? What appears to have succeeded or failed? How have high technology innovations been used to change how services are delivered?

Linkages to Other Library and Information Services. Public libraries are part of a complex network of other libraries and public and private institutions with sometimes complementary resources and services. How have current networks been used by libraries to address change? How well have they worked? How might the interlibrary ties be best exploited to meet the future demographic challenges?

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[5] Crockett, 1979.

SCOPE

The study addresses the implications for public libraries of the state's growing ethnic and racial diversity. But public libraries face other significant challenges, such as the general aging of the state's population, the rise in two-worker households, growing traffic congestion in the state's major urban areas, and advances in information technology. Each of these alone presents challenges to public libraries. For example, the rise in two-worker households has increased the number of latch key children who turn to libraries as a safe place to be after school.[6] Increasing congestion can reduce physical accessibility for many users and can slow down delivery of interlibrary loans. Together, these challenges shape the complex environment in which libraries serve the public.

We did not evaluate comprehensively these other challenges to public libraries. We did consider them to the extent that these trends directly relate to growing ethnic and racial diversity. For example, we analyzed employment patterns of minorities and possible uses of advanced technology to serve individuals from minority groups.

Therefore, we recommend that policymakers considering the future of public libraries use this report in combination with other analyses of the challenges public libraries face.

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[6] Noble, 1988.

III. CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

To consider how public libraries serve their communities, it is helpful to understand a few of their characteristics. This section provides an overview of California's public libraries: their size, where and how they deliver services, and how they are funded. This section should be especially helpful to nonlibrarians as an orientation to the state's public libraries.

BASIC INFORMATION ON CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

There are 169 public libraries in the state. These libraries provide services through 2,989 service outlets, 37 percent (1,120) of which are building outlets—main libraries, branches, or library stations. The remaining 1,869 outlets are stops made by mobile libraries.[1]

Public libraries are local government agencies. Of them, 63 percent (106) are municipal agencies, and a quarter (43) are county agencies. The remaining 20 are governed by combined city-county governments or special districts.

California public libraries vary widely in the size of populations they serve. Table 1 shows that 12 public libraries combined serve over half of the state's population. Five libraries combined serve 34 percent of the state's population: Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles County Public Library, Orange County Public Library, San Diego Public Library, and Sacramento Public Library. Conversely, 70 percent of the libraries in the state together serve only 18 percent of the state's population.[2] Hence, relatively few libraries serve most of the state's population; most of the state's libraries serve much smaller population areas.

Public libraries rely predominantly on local governments for funding. In Fiscal Year 1985, 91 percent of their funding came from local sources (counties, municipalities, special districts). Only 7 percent of their funding came from state sources in the form of formula allocations or project grants and 2 percent from federal sources.[3]

Since Proposition 13 took effect in Fiscal Year 1979, public libraries differ in the method used to receive local funds. Some public libraries

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[1] California State Library, 1987a.

[2] Ibid.

[3] California State Library, 1987b, p. 38.

Table 1

PUBLIC LIBRARIES SERVE VARYING SIZES OF POPULATIONS

Population Served	Number of Libraries	% of State Population Served
Group 1 (over 500,000)	12	52
Group 2 (100,000 to 500,000)	39	30
Group 3 (50,000 to 100,000)	41	11
Group 4 (25,000 to 50,000)	33	5
Group 5 (12,500 to 25,000)	26	2
Group 6 (up to 12,500)	18	less than 1%

SOURCE: Data for Fiscal Year 1986 from California State Library, 1987a.

are funded from their city's or county's general fund, competing with general local government services for funding. Others are funded by special districts, and most counties receive a fixed proration of property tax revenues. Some special district and county libraries also receive Special District Augmentation Funds from their counties. These special district funds are divided among far fewer services than a local government's general fund. Hence, although all libraries are affected by the Proposition 13's limits on property tax rates, libraries vary in the amount of discretion their local governments can exercise in determining their library's budget and the number of other public services they compete with for funds. Further, because some local governments' tax bases are growing, their property tax revenues can grow within the limits of Proposition 13 and Proposition 4.[4] The result of these forces is that per capita expenditures for public libraries vary widely. The average (mean) library spent $16.04 per capita in Fiscal Year 1986; the median spent $13.86. For counties, median per capita expenditures were somewhat lower ($10.52), and the median for city libraries somewhat higher ($16.47).[5]

All but 6 of the state's 169 public libraries belong to one of 15 public library cooperative systems.[6] These are defined geographically, serve between 2 and 28 public libraries, and are governed by their member public libraries. The cooperative systems, referred to as systems, are funded by a combination of member fees, state funding authorized by the California Library Services Act, and occasional Federal Library Services and Construction Act grants administered by the State Library. Their primary services to members include facilitating intrasystem loans between members and interlibrary loans across system boundaries and providing back-up (second-level) reference services for members. Some systems are used by their members in other ways as well, such as for staff training, cooperative collection development, and joint planning.

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[4] See Sec. VI's subsection No Major New Resources for a discussion of library funding levels since Proposition 13 and the potential effects of Proposition 4.

[5] Derived from California State Library, 1987a.

[6] Ibid.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY'S MISSION

According to state law, California's public libraries have a broad mission to serve as:

> a supplement to the formal system of free public education, and a source of information and inspiration to persons of all ages, and a resource for continuing education and reeducation beyond the years of formal education.[7]

State law also addresses the individual's right to access to public libraries:

> It is in the interest of the people of the state that all people have free and convenient access to all library resources that might enrich their lives, regardless of where they live. . . . The public library is a primary source of information, recreation, and education to persons of all ages, any location or any economic circumstance.[8]

A statewide planning effort for libraries in the 1980s stressed the mission of libraries to provide access to all individuals and identify and eliminate barriers between people and their services.[9] These declarations of the public library's mission in California are consistent with those made by the Public Library Association and the 1979 White House Conference on Library and Information Services.[10] The public library's mission stresses the individual's need for information, knowledge, and ideas. Recently, there has been added emphasis at the state and national level for the library's need to overcome barriers to access—geographic, educational, physical, temporal, or psychological—to serve its full community, not just its traditional users.[11]

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[7] California Education Code, Section 19300.

[8] California Library Services Act, California Education Code, Section 18701.

[9] California State Library, 1982, p. 5.

[10] See, for example, *The Public Library Mission Statement and Its Imperatives for Service* (American Library Association, 1979) and *Information for the 1980's*, A Final Report of the White House Conference on Library and Information Services, 1979, p. 46.

Hence the public library's mission clearly calls for offering accessibility to its broad range of services to all individuals and for addressing barriers to access. Such a broad mission can serve only as an aspiration for a single institution with limited resources.[12] To deliver services with its limited resources, each library must translate its mission into roles and goals to fit its particular community.

SERVICES AND ROLES OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Public libraries lend books, provide information reference material, answer reference questions, conduct programs, and provide places for people to use library materials. Given the breadth of their mission and limited resources, public libraries choose the service delivery roles they emphasize. Some do this explicitly in their planning process; others do it implicitly as reflected in their staffing patterns, collections, and service delivery modes.

Traditionally, the role for public libraries has been as general cultural/educational/recreational resource centers in their communities. In the 1970s, their roles as information centers and multimedia centers became more common. Some larger libraries took on the role of research centers and language learning centers.[13] By the 1980s, the public library profession recognized that public libraries had to choose more explicitly what they could offer their communities and still maintain the quality of their services. They were suffering from an "overload of good works."[14] In response, the profession recently developed a planning and role-setting process to help libraries choose appropriate roles.[15] This process offers a variety of sample roles for libraries to consider to fulfill their mission, including serving as a community activity center, an independent learning center, a formal education support center, a popular materials library, or a preschoolers' door to learning.[16] This effort to define roles helps libraries recognize their limits and make tradeoffs between the following:

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[11] See American Library Association, 1979; *California Libraries in the 1980s: Strategies for Service*, 1982; *Information for the 1980's*, A Final Report of the White House Conference on Library and Information Services, 1979, pp. 46–48.

[12] Martin, 1983, p. 19.

[13] Ibid., p. 19.

[14] Ibid.

[15] McClure et al., 1987.

[16] Ibid., pp. 27–44.

- Lending books versus providing reference information and services
- Providing services to children versus adults
- Serving as a depository for intellectual material versus developing a demand-oriented collection for current users
- Offering a place for community activities versus information material for the community

This background information on public libraries will be useful as we analyze the implications of growing ethnic and racial diversity for the state's public libraries. First, though, we will examine the degree and character of this diversity.

IV. ETHNIC AND RACIAL PROFILE OF CALIFORNIA

California is already ethnically and racially diverse and is becoming more so. This section describes the demographic context of public library use and considers the directions in which it will likely change between now and the year 2000. We first discuss projections of state population by race and ethnicity, then the socioeconomic characteristics of these minorities relevant to library use. Finally, we analyze other characteristics shaped by race and ethnicity that may affect library use.

For our demographic analysis, we draw on the latest available projections of the future size and ethnic makeup of California's population[1] and the population's distribution among the state's 58 counties.[2] Public libraries are particularly concerned with population trends within their service areas, usually the neighborhood or community level, but no statewide projections are available below the county level. Therefore, this section provides only a sense of the population trends for public libraries, as they turn to examine trends in their own service areas. The major developments related to the state's racial and ethnicity composition are the following:

- **The state is becoming more ethnically and racially diverse.** California's three largest minorities—Hispanic,[3] Asian/other, and black—are projected to make up 48 percent of the state's population by the year 2000, compared with 40 percent in 1988.
- **Racial and ethnic diversity is most pronounced at preadult ages.** Diversity will be more advanced among California's youth, particularly those of school age. For example, by the year 2000, 29 percent of all Californians are pro-

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[1] Population Research Unit, 1988.

[2] Center for Continuing Study of California Economy, 1987.

[3] Hispanic is not a racial category. We are using the definition of Hispanic used by the Bureau of the Census: those people identifying themselves as of Spanish origin. Most, but not all, Hispanics identify their race as white. The term "white" as used here refers to non-Hispanic whites. Of course, many whites have different cultural backgrounds, such as Arab, Israeli, or Irish, and may not speak English. We do not treat them separately in demographic analysis because of lack of data. We do address them in our discussion of dimensions of library use shaped by race and ethnicity.

jected to be Hispanic, but 38 percent of those will be under age 20.

- **Degree and character of diversity will vary by location.** Rapid influxes of newcomers in some areas will generate demographic "growing pains" comparable to those experienced in earlier decades.

CAVEATS

Public libraries need to rely on informed estimates of future population trends for many of their current policy choices. No view of the future, however, can be more than an "informed estimate." In this profile, we rely on three sources: the California State Department of Finance, the Center for the Continuing Study of the California Economy (both reliable and impartial sources of projections), and the 1980 Census of Population. We emphasize, however, that certain aspects of California's demographic future remain shrouded in uncertainty. Included here are the effects of changes in immigration laws, the future course of California's economic growth in an increasingly global economy, limitations on local financing, the emergence of building restrictions or zoning at the metropolitan or municipal level, and so forth. These domains are largely unpredictable for the time frame considered here; yet they can potentially alter local population trends as forecasted.

STATEWIDE TRENDS

In 1970, the state already had large minority populations. A total of 22 percent of Californians were minorities: 12 percent Hispanic, 7 percent black, and 3 percent Asian/other.[4] Applying a statistical measure to this diversity in 1970, the state's Index of Qualitative Variation (IQV) was .50.[5] By 1980, these three minorities had grown to 33 percent of the state's population,[6] and the state's IQV increased to .68. California had more than its proportionate share of 11 of the 13 races reported by the U.S. Census, as well as Hispanics. (The two exceptions were blacks and Eskimos.) For example, although the state accounted for 10 percent of the U.S. population, 31 percent of Hispanics in the United States in 1980 lived in California as did 36 percent of the Asian and Pacific Islanders. California was home to 46 percent of the Filipinos in the United States, 40 percent of the Chinese, 37 percent of the Japanese, and 34 percent of the Vietnamese. Clearly, the state's high ethnic and racial diversity makes comparisons with other states more difficult when considering how libraries serve their communities.

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[4] Population Research Unit, 1988.

[5] Bohrnstedt and Knoke, 1982, pp. 75–76. The IQV measures the degree of diversity across a specified number of categories—in this case, four (non-Hispanic white, Hispanic, black, and Asian/other). The IQV's maximum value is 1.0, meaning that the population is evenly divided across the four categories. An IQV of 0 would mean that the entire population fell in one of the four categories and, hence, was not diverse at all. This measure is a helpful supplement to simply aggregating minority groups together in a single percentage of the population. This simpler measure does not capture the degree of diversity across minority groups, but measures only two categories: majority and minority. For example, two states could be 33 percent minority, but one state could be far less diverse racially, with, for example, only one nonwhite race predominate.

During the 1990s, the state's racial and ethnic makeup will diversify further as the state's population increases. By the year 2000, Californians will be more numerous, proportionally more Hispanic (especially at the younger ages), and proportionally more Asian at the middle and older ages. By 1988, California's three largest minorities—Hispanic, black, and Asian/other—made up an estimated 40 percent of the state's population (Table 2), and the state's IQV rose to .77. By the year 2000, these three minorities are projected to reach 48 percent, primarily through a sharp increase in the number of Hispanic Californians. The state's IQV will increase to .84. The 18-percent increase in population statewide over this 12-year period will add 5.0 million more Californians, and 6 of every 7 of those additional residents will be either

Table 2

PROJECTED CHANGE IN RACIAL/ETHNIC MAKEUP OF CALIFORNIA'S POPULATION, 1988–2000

	Percentage of Total Population		Growth, 1988–2000	
Group	1988	2000	Absolute (000's)	Percentage of Total
Non-Hispanic white	59.5	51.6	381.9	7.6
Hispanic	23.7	29.4	3,069.3	61.3
Black	7.5	7.4	330.3	6.6
Asian and other	9.3	11.6	1,223.8	24.5
Total Population	100.0	100.0	5,005.3	100.0

SOURCE: Population Research Unit, 1988.

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[6] Ibid.

Hispanic or Asian/other. Hispanics alone will account for 61 percent of this 12-year population increase.

The category "other" in Table 2 combines various racial groups not separately projected by the Population Research Unit. Among these groups are California's American Indian population, which numbered 228,000 in 1980, less than 1 percent of the state's population but a higher number of Indians than in any other state.[7] Between 1970 and 1980, the state's American Indian population more than doubled.[8]

DIVERSITY FOR YOUNGER AGE GROUPS

An individual's age affects how he or she will use a public library, so it is important to examine how the state's population will change by age group. Although California's total population is projected to increase by 18 percent over the next 12 years, gains will be sharper at some ages and more gradual (or nonexistent) at others. As seen in Fig. 1, the 35- to 54-year-old age group is projected to grow fastest between 1980 and 2000; however, there will actually be fewer persons 20- to 34-years old by the year 2000 than in 1980.

In contrast, growth of the state's minority population will be most pronounced at younger ages. In 1985, 51 percent of Californians under 20 were minorities, compared to 38 percent of the total population. Similarly, projections show that by 2000, 60 percent of this age group will be minorities compared to 48 percent of the total population. These effects will be most pronounced for Hispanics at the young ages. Although Hispanics were only 22 percent of Californians overall in 1985, they made up 32 percent of the population under 20.[9]

This pattern is consistent throughout the younger ages. In the under-5 age group, Hispanics will increase by 16 percent between 1985 and the year 2000. Non-Hispanic whites, by contrast, will decline by 17 percent during the same period. In the 5- to 14-year age range, Hispanics will increase by 55 percent, more than three times the non-Hispanic white rate of increase.

Although California's Asians and blacks also have a comparatively youthful age structure, Hispanics are, and will remain, the largest and

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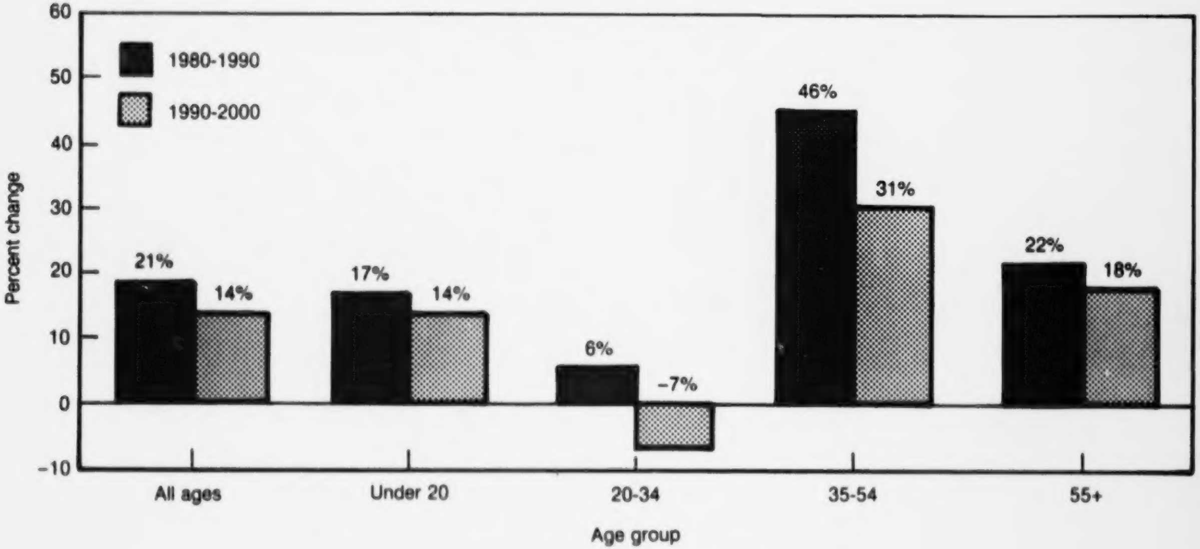
[7] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983a, Table 58.

[8] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1973, Table 17.

[9] Two separate demographic influences have produced this concentration of Hispanics in the preadult ages: (1) comparatively high fertility and (2) age-specific immigration. Together, these influences mean that Hispanic newcomers tend to be persons who have borne, or will eventually bear, large families. The circumstances are not likely to change soon, and California's Hispanic population will likely retain its youthful structure for many years to come.



SOURCE: Population Research Unit, Department of Finance, Report 88 P-4 (1988).

Fig. 1—Projected California population growth by age group: 1980–2000

most rapidly growing segment of the preadult population, according to these Population Research Unit projections.

A parallel development is seen for the young adult population. In the 18- to 34-year age range, the Hispanic population will register strong gains between 1985 and 2000, even though total population in these ages is projected to stabilize or decline. At the 35- to 54-year age range, by contrast, the magnitude of age structural change overshadows that of ethnic and racial change. Here, the maturation of the large baby boom cohorts is destined to swell the numbers of all groups in this age range, accentuating library needs characteristic of these middle-adult years.

Above age 55, minorities constitute a comparatively smaller share of population. By the year 2000, however, that share is projected to have increased markedly for Hispanics and also Asians.

LOCAL PATTERNS

Racial and ethnic diversification varies by county. Transformations that will take place on a statewide basis will be highly localized in their expression and may involve only specific population subgroups, such as Koreans or Vietnamese.

Hispanics, Asians, blacks, and American Indians are far from evenly distributed across the state. Black and Asian populations reside primarily in California's urban and coastal counties. Hispanics also are concentrated in urban counties and in some agricultural counties as well.

Relatively few counties had high concentrations of all three groups. For example, in 1985, in only four counties—Imperial, Los Angeles, San Benito, and San Francisco—do minority populations combined represent half or more of the 1985 county population. A total of 34 percent of all Californians live in these counties. In fact, 71 percent of Californians live in counties with at least 30 percent minorities. By 2000, in four more counties—Alameda, Fresno, Kings, and Monterey—minorities combined will represent at least half of the population. Some 39 percent of the state's population will live in these counties, and 92 percent of Californians will live in counties with at least 30 percent minorities.

We see wide variations in composition of ethnic and racial diversity when we look at sample counties:[10]

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[10] County population distribution by race and ethnicity from Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1987. County total population from Department of Finance, 1988.

- San Francisco was 53 percent minority in 1985 and is projected to be 65 percent by 2000. In both years, Asians are the dominant minority group and will account for most of the county's growth.
- In contrast, Los Angeles was 51 percent minority in 1985 and projected to be 60 percent by 2000; Hispanics are the dominant minority, followed by blacks, then Asians.
- San Joaquin county was 36 percent minority in 1985 and projected to be 47 percent by 2000. The overall population is projected to grow 47 percent with substantial increases of both Hispanics and Asians, the latter particularly from Southeast Asia, if current trends continue.
- Finally, Trinity illustrates a county with modest diversity in 1985 (11 percent), projected to remain modest in 2000 (19 percent). Still, this is a 73 percent increase in the share of its population that is minority. Its overall population will grow 24 percent between 1985 and 2000, but its Hispanic population will grow by 50 percent and its Asian population by 108 percent.[11]

Using IQV as the measure of diversity, one has a somewhat different perspective on the counties' future populations. Using the four categories for which projections are available, San Francisco and Los Angeles have the highest IQV's in 1985—.89 and .86, respectively. Although Imperial county had the highest percentage minority population (65 percent), its IQV ranked ninth (.70), because its minority population is predominately Hispanic. By the year 2000, Alameda county is projected to be the most diverse ethnically and racially, using the four categories projected. Its IQV will be .91, followed by Los Angeles and San Francisco counties, both projected to have .90 IQV's.

The following sections describe how the minority groups are distributed across California's 58 counties. Appendix A provides the ethnic and racial profiles of each county for 1985 and 2000. Appendix C provides three sets of maps showing the geographic concentrations of Hispanics, Asians, and the three major minority groups combined.

Hispanics

In 1985, Hispanics were 21 percent of the population. In that year, in only five counties were Hispanics as much as 30 percent of the population (Los Angeles and Fresno are the two major counties here).

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[11] See Appendix A.

Conversely, in 27 of California's 58 counties, Hispanics were no more than one-tenth of all residents.

By the year 2000, over twice as many counties (11) are projected to be at least 30 percent Hispanic. Among them are the major metropolitan counties of Ventura, Kern, and Monterey. On the other hand, 24 counties will still be 10 percent Hispanic or less by that year.

Asians

In 1985, Asians were 9 percent of the population. In most counties, Asians are only a modest or small fraction of the population. San Francisco, where over 1 of every 6 residents was Asian, represents the single major county concentration. Overall, in only about 10 counties were Asians as much as 10 percent of the population.

By the year 2000, this picture will have changed. About 25 counties will be at least one-tenth Asian with 11 of these counties being over 18 percent Asian. San Mateo, Alameda, and Santa Clara will have joined San Francisco as counties in which at least 1 of every 6 residents is Asian.

Blacks

Blacks are the most heavily concentrated of California's three major minority populations. Most counties had only a minimal presence of blacks, who in 1985 were 7 percent of California's population. In 33 of the state's 58 counties, blacks were less than 2 percent of the population. Only four counties—Alameda, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Solano—were over 10 percent black. The pattern here, unlike that for Hispanics and Asians, will remain essentially unchanged.

American Indians

In 1980, half of the American Indians in California resided in six counties: Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Bernardino, Sacramento, and Santa Clara. A total of 83 percent live in urban places versus 91 percent of all Californians. In fact, the L.A./Long Beach metropolitan area has been called the "Indian Capital of the United States," having more Indians than any other metropolitan area in the United States.[12] But these Indians were not highly concentrated in particular communities in these or other areas. Even in the Los Angeles area, Indians did not represent more than 2 percent of any municipality's population in 1980.[13] We do not have projections of the distribution of American Indians across the state in 2000.

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[12] *A First Friday Report, American Indian Unemployment: Confronting a Distressing Reality*, 1985.

EXAMPLES OF LOCALIZED IMPACTS

This statistical portrait of county-level ethnic diversification suggests how widely local patterns may vary around statewide trends. But patterns below the county level will vary even more and there will be variations in particular racial groups, not shown in the aggregate data. Even within counties with high diversity, individual communities may be mildly affected by these changes; or communities may face rapid influxes of particular racial groups, evolving into multiminority cities. We can see examples of these local impacts today:

- In Los Angeles County, Asian newcomers have tended to congregate in a few communities (e.g., Monterey Park and Gardena). In 1986, Asians made up 51 percent of Monterey Park's 61,000 residents, versus 33 percent only six years earlier.[14]
- Stockton, a city of 150,000 in 1980, is estimated to have increased 23 percent in total population over the following seven years, mostly through a substantial influx of Southeast Asians.[15] A city that was 41 percent minority in 1980 became one in which Hispanics, Asians, and blacks together are now estimated to be 51 percent of the population. Stockton's evolution into a multiminority city mirrors a development that lies in the future for other California cities.

SOCIOECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY AFFECTING LIBRARY USE

In this section, we describe how education, literacy, income, and employment status vary by minority group.[16] We present data from the 1980 U.S. Census and have no projections to 2000.[17] Because of this, the section provides only a snapshot in time of the minority groups. Each library needs to look at these characteristics for its own community across time and by age group to understand how they differ from statewide data and how they are changing.

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[13] American Indian Studies Center Research Unit of UCLA, 1986.

[14] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1986.

[15] Between 1981 and 1987, the Asian student population rose from 8 percent to 22 percent of total K-12 enrollments, according to the Stockton Unified School District's annual fall enrollment data.

[16] This section is descriptive, not implying causal relationships. It serves to enhance the ethnic and racial profile we have presented above because one's race and ethnicity are only two characteristics shaping one's potential interest in using a library. The variables we describe are causally interrelated to varying degrees, and we do not attempt to explain these relationships here. For example, ethnicity is a more important factor in

Education

Educational achievement varies by race. In 1980, the median years of school completed for Asians 25 years or older was 13.4 years. For blacks, the median was 12.6 years; Indians, 12.5 years; and for Hispanics, 10.8 years.[18] High school noncompletion rates for 20- to 24-year-olds show a similar pattern but vary by age group. As shown in Table 3, the proportion of adults 25 years and older without a high school diploma is greater among Hispanics, followed by American Indians, blacks, and Asians. All four minority groups exceed the state's overall noncompletion rate. The proportions change for persons 18 to 24 years. The noncompletion rates are lower for all groups, but the ranking changes: Asians have the lowest rate of high school noncompletion for this younger age group. This illustrates the importance of analyzing these socioeconomic characteristics across time and age groups.

In short, Hispanics as a minority group have the lowest educational levels in the state and highest rates of high school noncompletion. Asians fall at the other end of the spectrum, with blacks and American Indians in between.

Literacy

The largest single group of illiterate people in California are white, native-born Californians (43 percent of all illiterates), but a higher percentage of minorities are illiterate.[19] There are many ways to measure illiteracy. Using one recognized method, 28 percent of California's Asians have literacy "performance deficits," 26 percent of blacks, and 24 percent of Hispanics.[20] Looking at performance deficits by age and

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dropping out of school for Hispanics than for other ethnic and racial groups, where low socioeconomic status is more important (Catterall, 1987, p. 27).

[17] As defined in the 1980 Census, the data for Asians, below, include Pacific Islanders, and the data for American Indians include other races not identified separately.

[18] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983a, Tables 76 and 86.

[19] Dixon et al., 1987, p. 1.

[20] Ibid., p. 3. Estimate based on a study dealing specifically with illiteracy in California, referred to as the NOMOS study. The study measured different types of literacy problems as well as a composite of literacy "performance deficits." Due to small sample sizes in the study for male and female Hispanics, blacks, and Asians over 70-years old, the source referenced here recommends using these data as suggestive, not definitive

Table 3

NON-HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION AMONG CALIFORNIA'S 1980 ADULT POPULATION, BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

	Percentage Not Finishing High School	
Population Group	Persons 25 and Older	Persons 18-24
Hispanic	56	48
American Indian	34	35
Black	32	24
Asian and Pacific Islander	24	17
White	23	22
Total	23	22

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983a, Tables 76 and 86.

sex, younger blacks and Hispanic males have relatively more literacy problems than Asian females.[21] Though there are no available data measuring illiteracy by English language proficiency as well as by race and ethnicity in the state, from studies done elsewhere we know that some 37 percent of illiterate adults speak a non-English language at home. Hence, illiteracy problems for many ethnics are compounded by English language proficiency problems.[22]

Income

Income also varies by race. In 1979, median household income in California was $19,170. For Asians, it was $20,800; Hispanics, $15,200; American Indians, $14,800; and blacks, $12,500.[23] A similar pattern appears in data on the share of families below poverty level: There are proportionately more black families in this group (21 percent in 1979), followed by Hispanics (17 percent), American Indians (15 percent), and Asians (10 percent).[24]

(Dixon et al., 1987, p. 29). For a discussion of the study methodology and alternative methods of defining and measuring illiteracy, see Dixon et al., 1987, pp. 15–33, or Kirsch and Jungeblut, 1986.

[21] Ibid., p. 29.

[22] Ibid., p. 19–20. For a discussion of English language proficiency by race and ethnicity, see below, p. 28.

[23] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983a, Tables 81 and 91.

[24] Ibid., Tables 82 and 92.

Employment Status

There are several employment measures we could examine; here, we use unemployment rates to illustrate how employment status also varies by minority group. Statewide, American Indians had the highest rate of unemployment (12 percent) in 1980 for the civilian labor force 16 years and over, followed by blacks (11 percent), Hispanics (10 percent), and Asians (5 percent).[25]

Single-Parent Families

Overall, about a quarter of all Californians under age 18 do not live with both of their parents. This fraction is highest among blacks (55 percent) and lowest among Asians (16 percent).[26] American Indians and Hispanics fall in between (37 percent and 27 percent, respectively).

DIMENSIONS OF POTENTIAL LIBRARY USE SHAPED BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

Three other factors may affect how and if minorities use public libraries:

- Their desire to assimilate culturally or maintain their cultural identity
- Cultural traditions toward reading, libraries, and government
- Language proficiency

We will discuss each factor below.

Desire for Cultural Identity

How and if one wants to maintain cultural ties is up to the individual and varies by individual within and across minority groups. People are more likely to want to maintain these ties if:

- Their cultures are dissimilar from those of their adoptive county
- They have recently immigrated

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[25] Ibid., Tables 77 and 87.

[26] We derived the proportion of each group under 18 not living with both of their parents from 1980 U.S. Census data of those living with both parents. This is an estimation of single-parent households, for some included in our estimates may live with neither parent. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, Tables 64, 74, 84.

- They have not permanently immigrated
- They are part of a large group immigrating at one time.[27]

The desire for cultural identity will vary by minority individual and subgroup. The groups we describe in our demographic analysis are not monolithic. Most of the state's Hispanic residents are of Mexican origin but, even for the Hispanic population, permanence of residence in California and cultural heritage vary, hence the desire to maintain cultural identity varies as do the cultures themselves.

Among the Asian population, cultural heritage and desire for cultural identity vary at least as widely. This group is even more heterogeneous than the Hispanics, including for demographic purposes such differing cultures as Japanese, Vietnamese, Hmong, and Korean.

American Indians in California also have varied backgrounds. Only 1 percent of those in the Los Angeles area are from California tribes.[28] The remainder are from tribes from all over the country, all with different cultural traditions.

Many non-Hispanic whites desire to maintain cultural identities for their particular ethnic groups or religions. This group, too, is far from monolithic. For example, Jews, Germans, Swedes, Iranians, Arabs, and Mormons are all most likely to fall in this racial category, but individuals in these groups may want to maintain their very different cultural heritages.

Recency of immigration varies widely by group as well. For example, in 1980, 38 percent of the state's Hispanics were born outside of the United States and 18 percent of Asians.[29] In Los Angeles County, 64 percent of Asians were foreign born; within those categorized as Asian, groups varied considerably with 87 percent of the county's Koreans being foreign born, but only 30 percent of the Japanese foreign born.[30]

Cultural Traditions Toward Reading, Libraries, and Government. Again, these cultural traditions vary considerably among ethnic groups and the circumstances under which the newcomers immigrate. American Indians, as well as some other racial groups, do not have as strong a written tradition as is held by America's core culture. Indians rely more heavily for transmitting cultural identity on oral methods or dance.[31]

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[27] Schaefer, 1979, p. 43.

[28] Lippert, 1987, p. 6.

[29] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983a, Tables 75 and 85.

[30] Asian Pacific Research and Development Council, 1985, p. 48.

[31] Lippert, 1987, p. 7.

Language Proficiency. We do not have statewide data on how many Californians are not proficient in English. We do know that 23 percent of Californians 5 years or older speak a language other than English at home.[32] This overestimates the number of persons not proficient in English, because it includes individuals whose home language is not English who can speak English well or very well. They may choose to speak a different language at home for the convenience of particular family members or to help teach the language to younger family members. Figure 2 illustrates how the English language proficiency of individuals over 5 whose home language is not English varies. Of those speaking Spanish at home, 30 percent could not speak English well or at all. Of those speaking the Asian languages, 24 percent identified by the Census did not speak English well.[33] Again, variations are even greater for specific races: Only 9 percent of those over 5 speaking Filipino at home could not speak English well, while 41 percent of those speaking Vietnamese could not.

These figures need to be interpreted carefully for they do not measure the share of minorities in the state who are not proficient in English. They provide only the share of those over 5 years who live in families where non-English is spoken and who are not proficient in English.

Language proficiency varies by recency of immigration. For example, Mexican immigrants begin learning English almost as soon as they immigrate; then they proceed rapidly. More than 90 percent of first-generation U.S.-born Mexican immigrants speak English proficiently. Over half of second-generation Mexican immigrants are monolingual English speakers.[34]

SUMMARY

Californians are already an ethnically and racially diverse population and will become more so by 2000. Hispanics, already the largest minority group, will account for 61 percent of the state's population growth between 1985 and 2000. The major minority groups—Hispanics, Asians, and blacks—now, and will continue to, represent an even larger percentage of those under age 20, while the state's overall population will grow fastest in older age groups.

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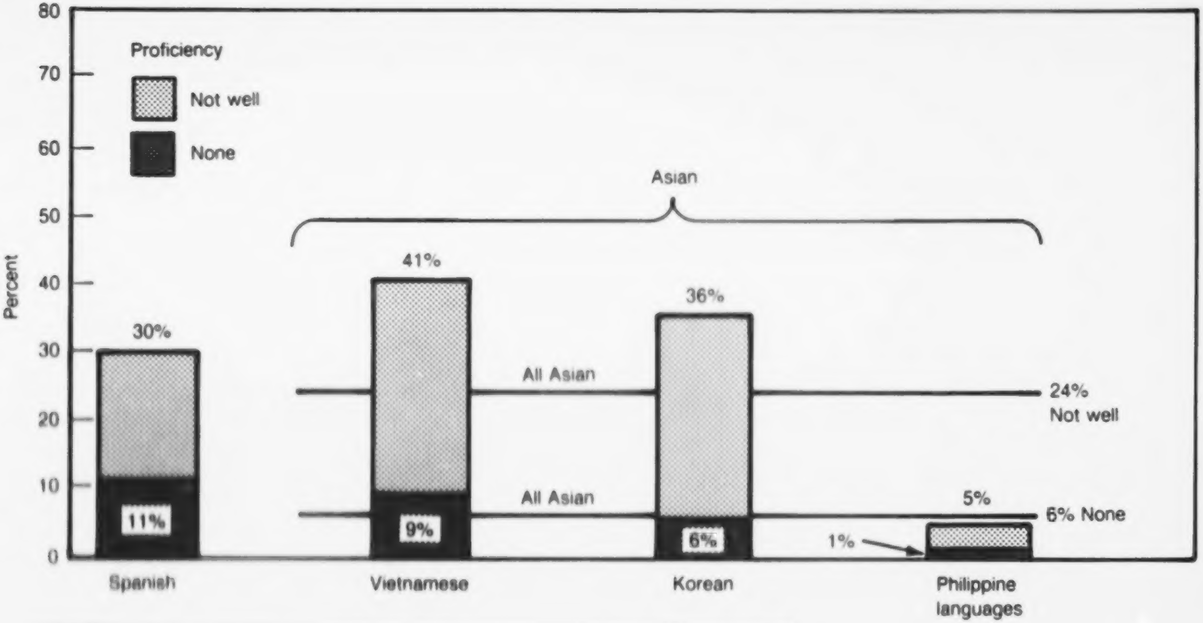
[32] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983b, Table 198.

[33] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983b, Table 197. Asian languages identified: Japanese, Chinese, Philippine languages, Korean, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, and Thai.

[34] McCarthy and Valdez, 1986, p. 61.



SOURCE: U.S. Census, 1980, PC80-1-D1, Table 197.

Fig. 2—Proficiency in English varies by language spoken at home

The degree and character of this diversity will continue to vary widely by location (as it now does). Some counties are already more diverse than others will be by 2000. In some, Hispanics are the dominant minority group, in others, Asians are. The rapidity of change and the particular racial group involved will vary even more dramatically at the municipal and neighborhood level than it does now.

The state's major minority groups have different socioeconomic profiles. Hispanics had lower education levels and the highest high school noncompletion rates in 1980. Asians had the highest median income and education levels of the minority groups and were least likely to be unemployed. Asians had relatively more literacy problems than the general population, followed by blacks, then Hispanics. Blacks under 18 years were least likely to live with both parents. These characteristics vary by specific racial group, by area, and across time. The minorities also vary in other characteristics: their desire to maintain their cultural identities; their cultural traditions toward reading, libraries, and government; and language proficiency.

In the next section, we will analyze what this profile means to public libraries that serve communities with particular minority groups.

V. IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

What does the state's growing ethnic and racial diversity mean for public libraries? How will libraries know if they need to change and, if needed, determine how to change? How may they need to change, given what is known about the state's minorities? Have any libraries needing to change done so? We address these questions in this section to the extent possible, given the limits of available data.

To determine what ethnic and racial diversity mean for public libraries, we returned first to the public library's mission, which calls for the public library to be accessible to all individuals—minority or otherwise. Next, we learned what was known about who uses public libraries now and why. Library usage data alone will not reveal if libraries face a problem serving their diverse communities. As discussed in Sec. I, if nonusers have equal access to library services and have made informed choices not to use public libraries, then there is no cause for concern. But since no data are available to measure public library accessibility or access barriers, library usage data provide at least limited information on the relationship between public libraries and racial and ethnic minorities, and potential directions of change.

Third, we examined the characteristics of minorities in Sec. III and assessed their relevance to library usage. We developed a simple framework to suggest ways for libraries to evaluate whether they need to adapt and various ways they might adapt. We summarize this analysis below.

Finally, we provide observations, based on limited information from our interviews and case studies, on whether minorities face barriers and how libraries have responded to growing ethnic and racial diversity.

WHO USES PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

The characteristics of public library users in California are not known statewide, nor is the percentage of the population that uses them. Studies of adult usage, conducted nationally and outside of California, show that a minority (between 25 and 30 percent) of adults use public libraries often (e.g., in the past three months prior to the survey). Further, about one-third of adult users account for about two-thirds of public library use. Compared to the general public, those who use libraries are more likely to be white, better-educated, in general younger, and female, to have a higher income, and to live closer to a public library.[1]

Even if one is concerned with access to public libraries by racial and ethnic minorities, in most studies considering race, race alone has not been found to be a statistically significant predictor of library use.[2] It is more important to look at an individual's education, marital status, employment status, and family size.[3] The strongest single predictor of library usage is education level: the higher one's education, the more likely one is to use a public library.[4] Heavy users are even more likely to be well-educated. Although some research shows that higher-income adults are more likely to use libraries than low-income adults, family income is not as strong a predictor of library use for children: children of low-income parents are more likely to use libraries than their parents.[5] These findings regarding library users have been remarkably constant for the past 40 years.[6]

These demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, combined, still do not fully predict who uses libraries.[7] Such factors as achievement motivation, positiveness of attitude toward new media/technology, and plans for adult education are also significant predictors of library use.[8]

Library use is voluntary, so it is helpful to learn why nonusers do not use libraries. Interestingly, they do not report dissatisfaction with their public libraries or a lack of understanding of how to use them. In fact, 90 percent of adults surveyed in a 1975 Gallup Poll reported they found libraries easy to use.[9] Several surveys of nonusers show that they did not use public libraries primarily because they were not interested in reading, did not have the time to read, or, if they wanted to read, had other sources of books.[10] Like the characteristics of users, the reasons for nonuse have held for over 40 years.[11] This finding may be especially difficult to generalize to California because of the differing cultural traditions of California's many ethnic and racial groups.

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[1] For reviews and summaries of various studies of library users from 1949 to 1975, see Zweizig and Dervin, 1977; Kronus, 1973; and L. White, 1983, pp. 29–43. For a discussion of the results of the Public Library Inquiry conducted in 1947 for the American Library Association, see Campbell and Metzner, 1950. A summary of a 1975 Gallup Poll on library usage is found in "In the News: Gallup Poll Surveys American Library Role," 1976, and in L. White, 1983, p. 30. The poll results showed that 25 percent of adults claimed they had used a public library in the past three months; 40 percent in the last year. In a more recent Gallup Poll (referenced by L. White, 1983, p. 30) 51 percent of adults claimed to have used the library in the past year.

[2] Zweizig and Dervin, 1977, p. 240; Kronus, 1973, p. 121.

[3] Zweizig and Dervin, 1977, p. 240; Kronus, 1973, p. 121. Adults with large families are more likely to use libraries than those with smaller families. All of these factors except marital status are positively correlated with library use.

[4] Zweizig and Dervin, 1977, p. 239; Kronus, 1973, p. 121.

[5] L. White, 1983, p. 38. Kronus (1973, p. 122) concludes that income is not a significant predictor of adult library use, holding other factors constant.

[6] Campbell and Metzner, 1950, p. 21.

[7] Zweizig and Dervin, 1977, p. 245; Kronus, 1973, p. 121.

[8] Zweizig and Dervin, 1977, p. 244; Kronus, 1973, p. 121. Adult library users were more likely to have higher achievement motivation, a positive attitude toward new media/technology, and plans for continuing their education.

Summary

What is known about who uses public libraries? No statewide data are available on who uses public libraries in California. Nationally, those who choose to use public libraries have been found to be a minority of the population in study after study. For many years, library users have come from the well-educated, younger, and more affluent portion of the population. Users are more likely to be white than nonwhite, but race does not appear to be a good predictor of library usage. Education is the strongest predictor. No studies consider how library usage varies by cultural tradition or language proficiency.

WHY DO PEOPLE USE PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

Most public library usage in the United States is strongly linked to children or the educational process. Well over half of all library usage is by or on behalf of children.[12] The single largest category of adult users are also students, followed by housewives.[13]

Student users make up a proportionately larger share of users in low-income, minority areas than in other areas.[14] Nonstudent adults use libraries mostly for recreational purposes or for "personal information," a vaguely defined term.[15]

Most people use public libraries to borrow books.[16] Public libraries are the source of one-quarter of books read.[17] Very few people turn to libraries as a source of reference information. Various studies have found that between 2 and 17 percent of the public turn to public libraries to answer questions or solve problems.[18] And the library has been referred to as "an obscure node in a mighty and growing information complex"[19] despite the profession's increasing attention to libraries as information centers.

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[9] "In the News," 1976.

[10] Ballard, 1986, pp. 131–132; Knight and Nourse, 1969, p. 85.

[11] Campbell and Metzner, 1950, p. 21.

[12] L. White, 1983, pp. 42–43.

[13] See Ballard, 1986, for review of several studies making this point.

[14] See Ballard, 1986, p. 129, for comparison of studies.

[15] L. White, 1983, p. 42.

[16] Campbell and Metzner, 1950, p. 39; Ballard, 1986, p. 143.

[17] Leigh, 1950, p. 31.

When people do pose questions to reference librarians, studies report that close to half are directional questions. (These are not counted by libraries as reference questions.)[20] Most reference questions posed to librarians are factual and can be answered in less than 5 minutes.[21]

What is known about the reasons for library usage in California echoes what has been found nationally. One statewide study of how libraries helped adult users showed that adults use libraries for leisure or free time (53 percent of respondents), home and hobbies (40 percent), and for school or homework (39 percent).[22] Unfortunately, there is no information available for California on how much usage is by or on behalf of children.

There are statewide data available on the number of materials public libraries lend (called circulation). Circulation per capita was 4.9 in 1986, 15 percent below its pre-Proposition 13 level, and has remained relatively stable for the past three years.[23] Interlibrary loans have constituted about 0.2 percent of public library circulation for the past several years, pre- and post-Proposition 13.

Statewide public library activity statistics offer a rough measure of the relative importance of borrowing books versus asking reference questions for California's public library users. As elsewhere, many more Californians go to libraries to borrow books, not to answer questions. Per capita circulation was 3.5 times per capita reference contacts in 1986.[24] Reference per capita in 1986 was still 11 percent below 1978, just prior to Proposition 13, but increased statewide by 17 percent between 1981 and 1986.[25]

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[18] L. White, 1983, p. 38; Ballard, 1986, pp. 213–216; Zweizig and Dervin, 1977, pp. 236–238; Martin, 1950, p. 35.

[19] Martin, 1983, p. 20.

[20] See Ballard, 1986, pp. 218–220, for a discussion of several studies between 1935 and 1980.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Dervin et al., 1985.

[23] Derived from California State Library 1982, 1987a. Data by fiscal year, ending June 30.

[24] The ratio of per capita circulation to per capita reference contacts varies across libraries, but only two public libraries in 1986 had higher reference contacts per capita than circulation per capita. (California State Library, 1987a). A reference contact is a question answered by a library, excluding directional questions.

[25] Derived from California State Library, 1982, 1987a.

One statewide study focused particularly on where Californians turn for information to answer important questions in their daily lives.[26] As was found elsewhere, very few Californians seeking information turn to libraries: Only 7 percent reported libraries as a source of information for their important questions. As shown in Table 4, Asians were much more likely to do so (20 percent), blacks and Hispanics least likely (3 and 4 percent, respectively). Over half of Hispanic respondents reported they never go to libraries for information, while fewer than a quarter of Asians reported they never do so. The same 1979 study found that only 13 percent of low-income respondents reported they go to the public library for information compared to 27 percent of high-income respondents.[27]

Summary

Much public library use is by or on behalf of children or by students, young and old. Nonstudent adult users are most likely to use the library for recreation or personal pursuits. Low-income minorities are more likely than other users to use public libraries for education, rather than recreation. Low-income children are more likely to use libraries than their parents.

Table 4

MINORITY GROUPS DIFFER IN USING LIBRARY TO SEEK INFORMATION

	Percentage Using Library for Information	
Minority Group	For Most Important Questions	Never
Asians	20	24
Whites and others	10	32
Hispanics	4	51
Blacks	3	46

SOURCE: California State Library, 1979, pp. 4-5.

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[26] The study first asked respondents what questions arose in their daily lives. Then they were asked whether they could get information to help them answer these questions. Most respondents felt information would help, but Hispanics were less likely (61 percent felt information would help); Asians, most likely (76 percent); blacks and non-Hispanics were in between (72 percent and 68 percent, respectively).

[27] Ibid.

When people do use libraries, they primarily borrow materials. They rarely turn to libraries to answer questions. The great majority of their questions can be answered fairly quickly without extensive research.

In California, as elsewhere, few people see libraries as a source of information. Asians are much more likely to do so, blacks and Hispanics least likely.

No study has examined if the reasons people use libraries vary with cultural traditions, desire for cultural identity, or language proficiency.

WHAT DOES DIVERSITY MEAN FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES?

The state's growing minority groups differ significantly in their demographic profiles, but, generally, the minority population is younger, less well-educated, and less well-off than the state's overall population. Because studies show that people who are well-educated and have higher incomes are more likely to use libraries, it would not be surprising if fewer minorities used public libraries than the general population. This would be a likely prediction, not because of race but because of variations in education and income between minorities and the general population. But this discussion is misdirected for four reasons:

- The minority groups in the demographic analysis differ considerably from one another in their socioeconomic characteristics; thus, combining them as "minorities" is misleading.
- Members of the minority groups examined are more likely to be somewhat younger than the general population. So treating even individual minority groups as homogeneous is not useful, because age affects if and how one uses a public library.
- Individual's cultural traditions toward reading, libraries, and government also affect whether or not the public library is perceived as useful and is actually used. These cultural traditions vary by ethnicity, which is often not defined by race. There is wide variation in cultural traditions within racial categories because of ethnic differences.
- Language proficiency, which varies within racial categories, also affects if and how an individual uses a library. If an individual does not speak or read English well, library services and infor-

mation will be useful only if they are available in his or her language.[28]

Hence, race itself is not the characteristic most relevant to who uses libraries and why—socioeconomic and cultural characteristics appear more useful. And these characteristics will vary considerably across libraries' service areas and within the major race and ethnic categories for which projections are available.

HOW WILL LIBRARIES KNOW IF THEY NEED TO CHANGE?

In order to serve their racially and ethnically diverse communities, individual libraries need to determine if and how this diversity affects their services and collections. They need to know what services and information would be useful for their communities and what community members would like from libraries. They also need to analyze if there are access barriers to racial or ethnic minorities (or other segments of their community).[29] A library cannot complete these tasks by knowing its community's racial or ethnic composition alone. Based on what is known about the state's minorities and who and why people use libraries, we suggest five sets of questions for libraries. We then propose a framework for libraries to analyze what the answers to these questions mean for their services and information.

First, what are the community's socioeconomic characteristics, including:

- Educational achievement?
- Age distribution?
- Household or individual income?
- Family patterns?
- Employment characteristics?

Based on our interviews and case studies, a library's planning process usually answers this set of questions but is less likely to analyze how these characteristics are changing and how they vary across age groups and across the community. Also, the questions may not be asked between formal planning processes but only every several years when a plan is updated. Information demands are situational,[30] so librarians cannot derive them directly from such a socioeconomic and demographic profile of minority groups; but the profile can help them determine what individuals are more likely to want and where to turn next for more information. For example, if educational achievement for adults is low, interviewees suggested librarians may want to learn more about whether many adults are taking evening classes or trying to develop particular job skills. Such activities may mean they could benefit from particular library services.

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[28] As part of a desire for cultural identity, many minority individuals may also want books and materials in their native languages; but it is important to distinguish between people who need to find information in a different language because they do not speak English well and those who want materials in a different language to maintain their cultural identity. The non-English materials these two groups want will probably be considerably different.

[29] Our focus here is barriers to minorities, but the same analysis may help identify barriers to others.

Second, what are the cultural characteristics of the community's residents:

- How strong is their desire to maintain their cultural identity and proficiency in their native language? Or are they more interested in assimilating culturally?
- What are their cultural traditions toward reading, government, and libraries?

To answer these questions, it may be helpful to learn about the immigration patterns of community residents: How recently did they immigrate? How permanently? Do they immigrate to the library's community directly from their native country, via another country, or even through other states within the United States? Answers to these questions may lead a library to emphasize materials needed for citizenship tests or information on basic services for newcomers in the community.

In our case studies and interviews, we found this second set of questions is asked far less often and is much more difficult to answer than the first set, although it appears to be at least as important. An individual's cultural traditions may especially affect how well-informed he or she is about the potential benefits of a library and how to use a library.

A minority individual's desire to maintain cultural identity may affect what he or she wants to find at the public library: information on cultural heritage, history, and traditions; books reflecting an ethnic group's or race's role in American events, past and current. It may also mean he or she wants material in his or her native language to maintain language skills, to find information or literature not available in English, or to teach the language to children or others. If a minority individual wants to assimilate culturally, he or she may be more interested in different types of information.

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[30] Zweizig and Dervin, 1977, p. 250. "Situational" information demands are defined as those of an individual when "he finds himself in a situation in which he feels an information practitioner would be useful."

Several interviewees provided examples of the importance of cultural traditions toward reading, government, and libraries in determining library usage. For example, some reported that immigrants from countries with political oppression were reluctant to provide identification to a traditional public library because it is a public agency. Others cited examples of immigrants with a tradition to turn not to books for information but to written material on community kiosks. Still others mentioned cultural traditions of some blacks not to use libraries due to the many years when blacks were not welcome in many of the country's public libraries.[31]

Each library will probably serve a range of ethnic groups with differing cultural characteristics within and across them. Some of these ethnic groups may be defined by race, but many will not be. For example, three persons categorized as Chinese may have very different cultural traditions: one may have recently immigrated from Beijing, another from Hong Kong. The third might be a third-generation Californian whose cultural traditions are more American or Northern European than Chinese.

The third set of questions deals with language proficiency. How well do the community's residents speak English? Do they rely on English as their primary language? How does this vary by age, location, or other characteristics? Again, this is a difficult question to answer. As discussed in Sec. IV, knowing the number of households where non-English is spoken can be misleading, because many in these households speak English well. By reviewing school records, talking with social service agencies, and keeping in touch with community organizations, libraries can learn more about language proficiency, supplementing U.S. Census data.

Fourth, given the answers to these questions, what barriers to library use—temporal, geographic, cultural, psychological, educational—do minorities in the community face? To help libraries identify such barriers, we developed a framework with two dimensions: service and information. By "service" in the framework, we mean the services a library provides and how it informs its community about what it offers. By "information," we mean the information an individual wants from a library, if he or she chooses to use it. There can be barriers to public libraries along both dimensions. For example, there can be barriers to *service* for minority individuals under the following conditions:

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[31] Nauratil, 1985, pp. 109–111.

- The minority individual does not know the library's potential uses and benefits and cannot make an informed choice about whether or not to use the library.
- He or she does not perceive the library as a potential source of education and information and so does not use it or ask for it to change.
- He or she does not know how to use the library and finds it difficult to learn to do so.
- He or she does not feel comfortable there or welcome as a new user.
- He or she does not have transportation to the library or have access to library services when he or she can use them.

There can be access barriers along the second dimension, *information*, as well. If a library does not have material an individual wants, in a language he or she can understand, then the individual faces a barrier to library usage. Why would someone go to a library that does not have the desired information?

The final set of questions deals with what roles the library plays for its community's residents. Once a community's residents are informed of the public library's purpose and the many services it can provide, what do residents want from their public library? This cannot be determined by the library based only on the answers to the above questions. The process calls for involving in some way the entire community, not current library users alone. If this is not done, the library may misunderstand what the community wants. For example, even though a community's residents may have a strong cultural identity, they may not want to use the library to nurture it. Or they may choose to use other sources of information to supplement their educations. The process includes setting roles for the public library, which the library profession is now emphasizing in its new planning process.[32] Given the changing profile of so many California communities, we suggest that public libraries in California emphasize in this role-setting process two questions:

- Considering accessibility to the entire community, do the service delivery models now being used need to change? Would different models be appropriate in different sections of the library's service area?

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[32] McClure et al., 1987.

- Might individuals—"minority" or otherwise—in many communities, even those that are fairly homogeneous racially and ethnically, want different information and services from libraries, because of the state's growing ethnic and racial diversity? For example, a white person might want to learn more about immigrants from Mexico or Latin America, because he or she works with many and not because they live in the area served by the branch library he or she uses. Or parents in the same community might want to make sure their children learn to understand and respect different Asian cultures, because many of their classmates are Asian.

DO LIBRARIES NEED TO CHANGE?

We did not collect statistical evidence of whether access barriers to public libraries exist for particular minorities or whether libraries now provide what minority residents in their communities want from libraries. Hence, we cannot draw general conclusions about whether libraries need to change. Based on our interviews and case studies, it appears that in some communities there are indeed barriers to public libraries for particular minorities, both *service* and *information* barriers. We have no systematic measures of which communities these are, so we do not know which libraries need to adapt to eliminate access barriers, the extent of these barriers, whether the libraries have adapted or recognize the need to do so.

We can, though, provide some evidence of such barriers, drawing on interviewees' reports and the case study libraries. The case study libraries we examined were in communities with different levels and characteristics of racial and ethnic diversity. One had a relatively large black population; another had a large Hispanic population and a rapidly growing but much smaller group of Asians. Still another served a community predominately of Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites, but the Hispanics appeared, based on our observations and interviewees' reports, to differ considerably in recency of immigration, cultural traditions, education, and language proficiency. Only one was relatively homogeneous racially. All but this one had been fairly diverse ethnically and racially for many years. In our interviews outside of the case study libraries, interviewees provided information on a larger set of public libraries in the state. Some of the interviewees directed these libraries, others worked in them; some were nonlibrarian users, others rarely used public libraries.

Several interviewees described barriers to library services and information for minorities. They reported that many Hispanic minorities without cultural traditions for library use faced access barriers to libraries because of the way libraries offered their services to their communities. For example, some libraries did not publicize well how a library could help users, so minorities unfamiliar with libraries were not familiar with a library's potential benefits. Or some libraries presented their collections and services passively and used library nomenclature unfamiliar to inexperienced users. This approach could make it difficult for the new or inexperienced user to find what he or she wanted or to find his or her way around the library, thus constituting an access barrier.

For example, in our case study libraries, we rarely found written directions for how to use the card catalogue, simple descriptions or signs showing the user where to find books on a particular topic, or guides to different services a library offers. More often, we found signs showing where various Dewey decimal system ranges were (e.g., "921.34 to 979.67"), not signs more understandable to the inexperienced user (e.g., "U.S. History" or "Astronomy"). When we asked for a summary guide to the Dewey system, something that might be helpful to the inexperienced adult user, we never received one designed for adults. (We were given a guide once, but it was decorated for children, which an inexperienced adult user might find somewhat humiliating.) Of course, libraries can offer this information verbally, but interviewees reported, and we observed, that libraries often offer user services or assistance passively, not when it appears to be needed but leaving it up to a user to ask for assistance. This approach may be appropriate for experienced users but can make it more difficult for new users who are not aware of how to use libraries or do not feel comfortable there because of their cultural traditions.

In two of the case study libraries, we observed barriers to access due to language proficiency; it appeared some users could not understand the information provided, could not easily find the material in their language, or could not find someone who could explain in their language how to use the library. In all six case study libraries, we found evidence of access barriers for those unfamiliar with how to use a library: We observed several library outlets that were not self-explanatory for the inexperienced user and did not have simple orientation aids available.

Based on our subjective observations, it appears that some Asian groups, including recent immigrants, have overcome any initial barriers to library access. At several case study libraries, interviewees reported that Asians, young and old, were voracious library users, even when libraries made only modest efforts to introduce their services or orient their collections to them.

Hispanics, on the other hand, appear to face more barriers, at least partially due to a lack of cultural traditions regarding library use and a reluctance to provide identification to government agencies. As a counterpoint to this generalization, we observed cases of enthusiastic library use by younger Hispanics, especially in welcoming settings. Such settings include book mobiles that regularly stop at elementary schools in predominately Hispanic neighborhoods. Another such setting was a city library branch. The branch appeared to be well-used by Hispanic and Asian children and young adults. It had a large Spanish language collection, a hospitable atmosphere for experienced and inexperienced users, a welcoming staff (some Hispanic, some non-Hispanic white), and space set aside for quiet conversations as well as reading.

Libraries we observed that offered collections and services in more traditional ways useful to experienced users appeared to serve relatively fewer Hispanics. This may be because what potential Hispanic users would want from public libraries does not match what traditional library users want or because of unfamiliarity with libraries. Where particular Hispanic communities have cultural traditions of library use, interviewees reported much higher library use and pressure on libraries to adapt their collections. These appear to be cases of minority individuals making informed choices about library use and influencing the libraries they want to use.

Based on the limited data we collected, it appears that libraries serving primarily black communities vary in their success, largely in relation to the socioeconomic characteristics of these communities. In some lower-income, predominately minority areas, interviewees reported that security of the library, staff, and patrons hampered use, and usage per capita was lower. Based on interviewees reports and our observations at one case study library serving a relatively large share of black users, it appears libraries stressing services to youth, better security, and an understanding of the community's residents and the information they want appeared more successful at serving their public. Again, this leads us to conclude that these libraries were relatively more successful, because they addressed access barriers for these minorities and tailored their services and information to the community.

We observed only three attempts to provide library services to American Indians. Cultural traditions and physical (e.g., lack of transportation) access barriers appear to hamper their library use. Interviewees reported that when service modes and collections have been adapted to lessen these barriers, use increased, although we were unable to substantiate this with usage data.

We did not systematically poll nonusers to see if they were informed about what libraries could provide, but interviewees reported that many minorities in their communities either did not know what a library could offer to them or were reluctant to use one so they didn't request services or information from public libraries.

IF A LIBRARY NEEDS TO CHANGE, IN WHAT WAYS?

We suggested questions that a library might ask to determine if it needs to adapt its services or information in response to ethnic and racial changes in its community. If it finds it does need to change, it will need to respond to the specific wants of its community residents, users and nonusers. Ethnic and racial changes occurring in the state are highly localized, varying in degree and character. Even if two communities had similar socioeconomic and demographic profiles, they still may choose to change or not to change in different ways, depending on residents' choices. Therefore, it is impossible to provide a single model of adaptation—many models may work. We suggest, though, that all libraries continually monitor changes in their communities, asking the above sets of questions and keeping in touch with users and nonusers to understand if and how it needs to respond.

Table 5 presents different characteristics of minorities in a hypothetical community and what this could mean for a library within our service and information framework. A real library will face a combination of one or more of these characteristics, depending on its particular minority community.

HAVE LIBRARIES NEEDING TO CHANGE DONE SO?

Based on what we could learn, it appears that some libraries have made changes to services and collections in response to increasing racial and ethnic diversity. In fact, five of the six libraries we studied had made explicit efforts to adapt to ethnic and racial diversity in their communities. Each had experimented with different models of service, some of which were eventually stopped and a few of which were made permanent. For example, one library moved a branch into an enclosed shopping mall in a lower-income, minority area to improve access to residents and increase security. Another began a book mobile for Hispanic children. Several increased their budgets for foreign language materials. One reported trying to provide books for loan outdoors in

Table 5

WHAT AN ADAPTIVE LIBRARY MIGHT LOOK LIKE

	Library's Response	
Characteristic	Service	Information
More minorities are younger	Services to young adults, children	Stress on collection for children, students, young adults
Sudden waves of immigrants	Closely monitor changes and learn cultural traditions	Basic needs of newcomers
Less library tradition	Stress on explaining, publicizing library; help to new users; user self-directions; reflect diversity in staffing	
Less reading tradition	Introductions to books; other media	Various media (e.g., nonprint, oral)
Poorer, higher unemployment	Services to job seekers; those wanting job skills	Information on finding jobs, skill development, public services
Less literate	Oral aides for learning to use the library	Simply written books for adults as well as children
Less educated	Study centers/help; school-related skills	Books/collection for schools, courses
Desire for cultural identity	Reflect culture in programs, staffing	Reflect culture throughout collection; non-English books reflecting demand
Fewer English speakers	Provide services in appropriate language; materials for those learning English	Provide collection, information wanted in appropriate language

city parks to be more accessible to residents. The same library reported also having had a Saturday morning program for Hispanic children, providing free public transportation. Interviewees outside of the case study libraries also cited many examples of libraries' attempts to adapt, most often emphasizing adding non-English materials to collections.

Many of the innovations we observed or that were described to us appeared to be primarily the result of the strong commitment and energy of individuals (mostly librarians), not a result of changes in the underlying library processes. Based on the evidence we gathered, it appears that when minorities have asked for changes to library services, libraries have made serious efforts to respond.

Many interviewees reported a concern that some libraries have not adapted sufficiently as their communities became more racially and ethnically diverse. For example, several interviewees described slow progress at hiring minority librarians or expanding their non-English collections. Other interviewees questioned whether a library should consider adapting, when it could not meet all of the requests of its current users: "Why should we reach out to new users when we have plenty to do to serve the users that seek us out?"

Two county public libraries in our case studies reported having especially difficult financial challenges, making it difficult to focus on growing diversity among other concerns. Four of the six case study libraries also were in the process of developing or implementing major electronic circulation and cataloguing systems, requiring much staff time and resources.

Even the libraries we observed or were described to us that perceived the need to adapt and were trying to do so appeared to face major obstacles. Libraries recognize some obstacles, but not others. Some obstacles are systematic: part of the processes libraries use to plan, develop their staffs and collections, and provide services. A few are idiosyncratic, such as the management styles of the library leadership. In the following section, we describe the major systematic obstacles we found.

VI. FACTORS AFFECTING ADAPTATION

This section first discusses the apparent lack of external pressure to change and what this may mean for libraries. We then identify five major obstacles that hamper public libraries that are trying to adapt their services and collections as their communities become ethnically and racially diverse:

- Libraries play many roles for their users, but these roles are rarely explicitly defined or ranked in order of importance.
- Even when libraries decide to adapt, the change process itself is difficult, and libraries sometimes do not know what or how to change.
- Libraries have no major new resources to help them change.
- Some of the materials and expertise available to libraries are scarce.
- It is difficult to measure whether a library has adapted successfully.

LITTLE OR NO INCENTIVE TO CHANGE

Based on our interviews, it appears that public libraries try to respond to requests for change from users, nonusers, or elected officials. But we found that libraries lack external political pressure to change. No external pressure to change may mean a library does not need to adapt to fulfill its mission—it is serving its diverse community well. But it may also mean that not all community members know enough about a library's potential uses and benefits to recognize the potential gains from various changes. Thus, a library may still need to change even if its community is not asking for change. We examine below this lack of external pressure to change.

When they turn their attention to public libraries, local- and state-elected officials generally report satisfaction with public libraries. Few we interviewed placed high priority on library services or had a sophisticated understanding of the library's mission, its potential role in the community, and possible service delivery modes. Few questioned the library's role as a lending facility and source of basic reference information. They rarely heard from their constituents regarding libraries, except regarding threatened closures, reduced hours, or services for rapidly developing areas.

Further, the state's local- and state-elected officials who determine library budgets are chosen by voters, who are likely to be a higher percentage of non-Hispanic white than the state's population. In 1986, 39 percent of the state's population was black, Hispanic, or Asian, but only 25 percent of adults eligible to vote were from these minority groups. This is because more minorities are below voting age than the general population and many are not citizens. Even fewer registered voters were minorities (20 percent) and still fewer voters were (16 percent).[1] Voter participation (those registered voters who actually vote) varies by minority group, though, and is increasing for some minorities, at least partially due to explicit minority voter registration efforts.[2] Still, a higher proportion of whites elect the state's local officials than any other racial or ethnic group.[3] This poses a dilemma for elected officials: They need to listen to those who elect them, but they also represent their entire communities. The disparity between these two groups may make it less likely that elected officials will place high priority on library services to minorities.

Our interviewees also report that minority groups and individuals themselves rarely call for libraries to change or turn to their elected officials to ask for changes. This may be for a variety of reasons. For example, they may use public libraries and be satisfied with them, so they do not want any changes. Or they may have made informed choices not to use libraries, preferring other sources of information. In these two cases, the lack of a call for change means no change is needed. But minorities may not ask for changes, because they are not informed about how useful a library could be to them or because they are not familiar, comfortable, or experienced with making their desires known to their elected officials.

We found two exceptions to this satisfaction with, or lack of attention to, libraries on the part of elected officials and minorities: (1) where the disparity between library users and the population's racial and ethnic diversity became so extreme that it was readily apparent to many; and (2) where minorities with a good understanding of the potential benefits of libraries or a strong reading tradition called for change. For example, in two case study libraries, where minorities represented well over half of the population by 1980, the libraries are making concerted efforts to adapt to diversity, partially in response to pressure outside of the library. In another city, according to interviewees, a library with a large Spanish-language collection was initiated by a group of Mexican immigrants. Its initial collection reflected the interests of Chilean immigrants, familiar with academic libraries, who knew the benefits of a library and how to use one. Based on our interviews and case studies, when minorities have called for change, many libraries have made efforts to respond.

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[1] Field Institute, 1987.

[2] Mireles, 1987.

[3] Field Institute, 1987, and Wolfinger, 1988. Much of the difference in turnout rates between whites and Hispanics can be explained by differences in demographic characteristics, such as education, income, and occupation. Holding these characteristics constant for whites and blacks, blacks were more likely to vote than whites in 1986 (Wolfinger, 1988, pp. 8–9).

The measures libraries typically use to monitor their performance and report to elected officials and general government management—namely, circulation and reference contacts—rarely show signs of rapid decline as communities increase in ethnic and racial diversity. If they do, interviewees report that libraries can fairly easily bolster them by providing more intensive services to their traditional users or changing policies, such as the limits on the number of books to be borrowed at once.

Based on our interviews and limited observations, it appears that if libraries decide to adapt to increasing diversity, they do so primarily because of internal pressures from librarians themselves. Interviewees report that this pressure often comes from minority librarians in their ranks, but sometimes it results from the library leadership's view of the library's mission and users.

LIBRARIES' MANY ROLES

Libraries play many roles for their users, but these roles are rarely explicitly defined or ranked in order of importance. The effort to provide service to all appears to have led libraries over time to add more roles, not to drop ones no longer appropriate. Based on our limited observations and case studies, it appears that this results in many libraries today having little flexibility to change their orientation; they are overloaded with a range of services, collection interests, and internal procedures, each appreciated by at least some users or defended by a few staff members. Our librarian interviewees reported their services include providing in-depth reference services, managing literacy programs, and developing special collections for preschoolers and research collections for college students. The collections sometimes include records, video cassettes, and even toys. And some libraries try to provide ample copies of the newest bestsellers in all branches.

Further, public libraries attempting to respond to ethnic and racial diversity sometimes see this adaptation as a new role, rather than something integral to all of their roles. Serving "underserved minorities" becomes one more role, often one of the latest to be added and a difficult one. When so viewed, interviewees reported that some librarians argue against it, asserting that the library cannot take on new roles when it cannot manage the roles it now has with its limited resources.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IS DIFFICULT

Even when libraries find they need to adapt, decide to adapt, and then limit their roles so they have some flexibility, the process of changing orientation is difficult. Adaptation requires reorienting services and collections to better reflect what the entire community wants, not just what the library's traditional users want. Also, librarians we interviewed reported their colleagues sometimes did not know how to change: what to change (e.g., roles, collections, staffing, services), what changes are most effective, or who has information on successful approaches. We found that much of this information is available, but many libraries do not know about them and even fewer use them. For example, many librarian interviewees did not know about the state's Books from Around the World service, offering loans of non-English books by subject to public libraries.

Change also means tradeoffs. If new services and information are emphasized, others have to be given lower priority or stopped; services to long-time users may have to be reduced.

Below we examine this obstacle in the areas of collections and services.

Changing Collections

Based on our limited data, it appears that when libraries do adapt, they are most likely to focus on changes to their collections, not on how services are delivered or how nonusers are informed of the potential benefits and uses of libraries. For example, our interviewees often responded to questions regarding the need for changes by describing how to obtain or select Spanish-language books. Hence, libraries appear to emphasize only one dimension of the information and service framework presented in Sec. V.

When libraries do modify their collections to respond to diversity, it appears they most frequently concentrate on adding non-English materials to their collections. These may be the changes most needed, but few librarian interviewees mentioned evaluating whether changes were needed to their English collections to reflect the different socioeconomic and cultural dimensions of their communities. They mentioned even less frequently considering changes to their collections for users living in racially homogeneous parts of their service area.

When a library's community changes, it may mean that a library needs to question its policies and rules of thumb for using its collection budget. Interviewees rarely mentioned examples of these types of changes, except incremental ones: e.g., increasing the amount of the budget used for non-English books. But a library may need to reconsider its distribution of its collection budget along fundamental lines, such as how much it sets aside for:

- Adult versus children's material
- Reference versus circulating materials
- Fiction versus nonfiction
- Materials on topics that keep the collection well-rounded but are rarely used
- Newly published materials versus older materials needed to improve a collection neglected in the past

A library may need to change its collection development guidelines by branch, given a branch's service area. We found no examples of explicit collection guidelines tailored to branches, although the case study libraries we analyzed typically did encourage individual branches to customize their collections. This appeared to be done usually on an ad hoc basis. In two of the case study libraries, though, the library's senior management did monitor fairly systematically the collection choices made by branch librarians. And in one case study library, central management made specific suggestions on how to adapt entire collections if libraries served particular minority groups.

No interviewee advocated that libraries should not continue to develop well-rounded collections across an entire library. Several, though, suggested that collections be tailored by branch, much more than libraries do so today. One case study library in particular was adapting to ethnic and racial diversity by tailoring branch collections. For example, several branches no longer had fully "well-rounded" collections with a few emphases. Instead, they had strong subcollections in certain areas. In this case, public transportation made moving between branches relatively easy for patrons, so the library reasoned that specialization was a net benefit to users: It might be more difficult to reach the specialized branch but, once there, the collection would be more comprehensive than a typical neighborhood branch's. Other interviewees also cited this strategy as useful. Some mentioned as a potential strategy devoting a particular branch collection to the needs of elementary- or secondary-school students and another to materials in particular languages and a range of cultures.

Interviewees also suggested other ways collections might change but rarely appear to do so. For example, a library might change its collection development procedures to reduce the number of duplicates of bestsellers or other popular books purchased or to reduce the budget for a particular subcollection to free up more funds for neglected subcollections now wanted by minorities.[4] Or a library may reduce the proportion of its collection budget spent on comprehensive reference materials, instead providing basic reference collections at most branches and basic non-English reference material for a growing minority population.

Changing Services

According to our librarian interviewees, one of the most common approaches to adapting services to minority individuals is to hire minority staff, who are then charged with serving minority patrons. Interviewees and our case study librarians reported that libraries far less often make other staff changes that may be needed, such as matching the cultural backgrounds of librarians with the communities they serve, teaching librarians how to tailor their services to the particular areas they serve, or testing the librarians' proficiency in the language of the non-English speaking minorities in their communities.

Many interviewees also suggested that libraries should increase their outreach efforts to nonusers in minority areas to introduce libraries to people unfamiliar with them. But in the case study libraries, staff given these responsibilities rarely had other assignments reduced to allow the considerable time needed for outreach programs. In two case study libraries, librarians charged with keeping in touch with minority community residents mentioned how difficult it was to fit this into their schedules. They reported often spending their own time in the evenings and on weekends doing so. Also, in the case study libraries, it appears that staff assignments in different outlets were rarely adjusted to reflect the varying levels of effort needed to publicize library services, help new users rather than experienced ones, or serve a higher mix of students or non-English speakers. (Interviewees mentioned these as examples of relatively more time-consuming tasks, which often fall more heavily on librarians in libraries serving minorities than elsewhere.) One of our case study libraries was working on ways to reflect these differing needs in their service outlet budgets, but the librarians there reported how difficult it was to do so correctly and change long-held rules of thumb about how to make allocations.

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[4] Tarin, 1987.

Similar to collection policies, a library's internal service and staff policies may need to be examined in light of increasing ethnic and racial diversity. New tradeoffs may be needed. In many cases, libraries may need to emphasize services and staff for youth, given their community's desires, and reduce staff for other services such as specialized reference or adult services. It may mean cutting back some technical services, so the library can make its branches more self-explanatory to inexperienced users or spend more resources letting nonusers know what is offered. For example, interviewees suggested that libraries might use more basic cataloguing techniques and rely more heavily on cataloguing utilities without modifications, in order to spend resources more cost effectively.[5]

Typically, our case study libraries reported trying to staff each service outlet with a librarian in charge, a reference librarian, and a children's librarian (specializing in services to preadolescents). Diversity needs may change such branch staffing patterns to provide, for example, more staff resources to serve older children and young adults (users that interviewees reported as often neglected) and less for professional reference staff at each branch. (Access to reference services at such a branch need not be cut off but instead supported by phone or even telefax services, if cost effective.)

Still other libraries may find they need to change their procedures for hiring certificated librarians and provide better training to nonlibrarians who have a strong service orientation and familiarity with the community's dominant minority culture. One case study library had an alternative career development procedure to help experienced nonprofessional staff to advance, but interviewees reported it had rarely been used. Another case study library reported success with training library staff to handle racial conflicts and tensions.

Changing Service Modes

We found that libraries often pose the question of service as "How can we get minorities to libraries?" rather than considering how to provide library services outside of the traditional branch setting. Most libraries are indeed constrained by the buildings they own: the cost of maintaining them and their fixed locations, which often do not mirror their current population distribution. But few libraries look hard for ways to address this constraint. (Interviewees reported it is especially difficult because elected officials often oppose such changes, not wanting any branches serving their constituents changed or eliminated.) Based on our interviews, it appears that the branch setting, even for activist minority librarians, is usually held as the norm, rather than one of many acceptable service modes. We found few libraries using other service delivery modes (e.g., mobiles, phone services, kiosks) to serve minorities, although many of these alternatives appear remarkably successful at overcoming barriers to minority use. For example, two case study libraries reported success with phone reference services provided in several languages. The services do not replace library reference services but they can answer many of the basic questions callers have in a language they understand. Another case study library reported success with a modest bookmobile for American Indians. The mobile allowed the library to reach the Indians where they congregated regularly, overcoming the fact that the state's Indian population is highly dispersed.

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[5] See also L. White, 1983, p. 91, for same suggestion.

NO MAJOR NEW RESOURCES

Adapting to diversity means changing how a library expends resources. This is much easier to do by adding resources than by reallocating existing resources. But, although the average public library's real per capita operating expenditures steadily increased over the past five years, they remain 7 percent below the library's pre-Proposition 13 level.[6] Worse, by 1985, California's municipalities managed to return their real per capita expenditures to pre-Proposition 13 levels, but chose to spread them differently across services, with libraries suffering. Some "essential" services, such as police and fire protection, now receive a relatively larger share of local expenditures, while the library's share has declined.[7]

Further reducing the likelihood of major additional resources for public libraries, many local governments are now reaching appropriation limits imposed by Proposition 4. These limits can be exceeded only if overridden by the majority of the electorate.[8]

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[6] Analysis of data for Fiscal Years 1978–1986: California State Library, 1982, 1986, 1987a; Crockett, 1979. Population data from Population Research Unit, 1988. "Real" per capita expenditures are per capita expenditures adjusted for inflation so they are comparable across years.

[7] Reid, 1988.

[8] By late 1986, 44 governments had successfully overridden their limits. (California Tax Foundation, 1987, p. 27, Table 16): 10 cities, 2 counties, 3 school districts, and 29 special districts. Eighty-one cities were within 20 percent of their limits as were 31 counties. (Ibid., p. 17, Table 9 [Cites study by Ralph Anderson and Associates.])

Hence, although the median public library's budget increased in real terms in the last five years, it has lost ground relative to other public services. Some types of public libraries have even lost ground in absolute terms. The real median per capita operating expenditures for county and library district public libraries and smaller public libraries of all governments declined between 1981 and 1986. Libraries serving over 500,000 people experienced only a modest gain over the same period, while libraries serving medium-sized populations did the best.[9]

Based on our case studies and interviews, we found that public libraries generally rely on an incremental budgeting process. This process can reduce the likelihood that libraries will reallocate current funding levels to reflect changes in orientation, because it assumes expenditures for existing activities remain relatively constant and focuses the decisionmakers' attention on marginal changes and how to use any new resources. This process may contribute to the perspective reflected by some librarians we interviewed, who, when discussing whether they should or would adapt to changes in their communities, responded by asking: How can we add new services when we can't adequately fund services to current users?

The one state-level source of discretionary funds for public libraries is the State Library, which administers modest grant programs using state and federal funds. Libraries can use these grant funds to fund new services for minorities, but our interviewees reported it was often difficult to continue the services beyond the grant period. This perspective, too, is more likely if a library relies on an incremental budget process.

We identified two other factors that may make limited resources an obstacle to adaptation. First, several interviewees reported that it costs more to serve many minority users because of the higher costs of acquiring and cataloguing some non-English materials, publicizing library services, determining what new users want, and helping users unfamiliar to the library. Other interviewees, though, argued that there were no data available to support this claim and many changes in orientation toward serving minorities can occur at no, or very little, cost.

Although overrides are remarkably successful, they are most successful when override funds are earmarked for particular services. (Ibid.) In the one recent case where libraries have been earmarked, the override passed. (Interview with Cy Silver, California State Library, March 23, 1988.) Elections asking voters to override Proposition 13 to permit additional taxes have been far less successful. Of the approximately twenty such attempts to increase taxes particularly for public libraries, only three have passed by the required two-thirds majority. (Ibid.)

[9] Analysis of fiscal year data for 1981 to 1986 from California State Library, 1982, 1987a. Medium-sized populations are defined as between 25,000 and 100,000.

Second, based on our case studies and interviews, it appears that libraries typically use a subjective process for allocating funds between service outlets, but circulation statistics often weigh heavily in this allocation process.[10] This means libraries with low circulation—perhaps because they serve minority users who borrow fewer books, need more help, or use the library for nonborrowing uses—may receive progressively fewer funds, even though they need relatively more funds to support the same circulation level. Under these circumstances, libraries are faced with the challenge of balancing efficiency versus equal access for residents.

SCARCE MATERIALS AND EXPERTISE

Even when libraries decide to change services and collections in response to ethnic and racial diversity, determine how to do so, and find the resources needed, they face yet another obstacle: Some of the materials and staff skills and experience they need are scarce. Although librarians disagree on how difficult it is to acquire non-English materials, such materials are not as accessible through the major, "full service" vendors libraries typically use. Book reviews used by many librarians to assess books prior to purchase are scarcer for non-English materials,[11] and several librarian interviewees reported that materials reflecting diversity in various fields are also hard to find.

Minority librarians and others with skills and experience to select and catalogue non-English materials and serve diverse populations are also scarce. First, only 5 percent of the state's public librarians are Hispanic; 4 percent, black; and 6 percent, Asian.[12] A recent survey of library school students in California showed these future librarians are not as racially and ethnically heterogeneous as the state's population. The students responding to the survey were 1 percent Hispanic, 1 percent black, and 12 percent Asian.[13]

Second, librarians need bilingual skills to serve some minority users, select and catalogue non-English materials, and communicate well with some minority community groups. According to our case studies and interviews, these skills are scarce among the state's public librarians.

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[10] There are some notable exceptions to this generalization. For example, one of the case study libraries uses and is making efforts to improve a more sophisticated allocation process to reflect differences in types of outlets, services, and users. This process in its current form, though, appears to favor libraries with more "natural users," that is, users who need less support and outreach.

[11] Tarin, 1987, p. 26.

[12] Scarborough, 1987, p. 24. Data from 1986.

[13] Ibid., p. 3. Calculated based on data provided.

Although no data are available on the number of public librarians or public library staff with bilingual skills, only 5 percent of public librarians were hired as "bilingual" librarians (whose job descriptions require bilingualism).[14] Of these, 74 percent speak Spanish; 15 percent, Chinese; and 3 percent, Japanese.[15] Although 69 percent of library school students responding to a recent survey reported at least some knowledge of a foreign language, only 3 percent of all students showed interest in serving linguistic minorities. Bilingual skills can of course be learned by current librarians, and public librarians report they favor librarians with bilingual skills during their hiring process.[16] Still, few libraries offer pay increases for bilingualism to overcome this apparent shortage.[17]

Third, if libraries are to emphasize services to youth because of the relative youth of minorities, children's librarians will be needed. Positions for children's librarians, though, take longer to fill than the average librarian position, indicating a potential shortage.[18]

Finally, the state's public libraries may face a general shortage of public librarians in the near future. Public libraries predicted they would need between 70 and 80 percent of all librarians needed in the state in the next two years, but only 28 percent of the students surveyed at the state's library schools (a prime source of the state's public librarians) wanted to work in public libraries.[19]

Even in libraries attempting to adapt, scarcities appear to affect the quality of collections and services for minorities in three ways. First, collections change more slowly and may include materials not wanted by users, because better materials were not available or the materials were not selected by skilled personnel. Several interviewees provided examples of these effects. Librarians at two of the case study libraries reported having trouble spending their full budgets for some non-English language materials because of long backorders and books being out of print. A publisher interviewed described how some librarians chose Spanish-language materials that their users did not find helpful, because the materials were books written for readers in Spain, not the United States. For example, some purchased Spanish-language home improvement books describing hand tools used in Spain, but less typically in the United States.

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[14] Ibid., pp. 1, 19, 20. Calculated based on data provided.

[15] Ibid., p. 21. Calculated based on data provided.

[16] Ibid., p. 79.

[17] Ibid., p. 79.

[18] Ibid., p. 79.

[19] Ibid., pp. 2, 4. Calculated based on data provided.

Another interviewee reported that some librarians trying to purchase materials in a language they did not speak bought materials in the wrong dialect for the non-English speakers in the community. Another cited examples of librarians not replacing missing volumes in a series of Chinese books, even though each volume was like a chapter in an English-language book. These librarians did not realize that this was similar to leaving a novel on the shelf with chapters torn out, something they would not do for an English-language book.

Second, fewer minority users are served by staff of their cultural background. Several interviewees reported that this was especially important in order to encourage those unfamiliar with public libraries to use them. They cited examples of how many more Hispanics and, in another case Koreans, used the library after a minority librarian was assigned to a service outlet.

Third, based on our observations, nonprofessional library staff or volunteers were more likely to provide services to non-English speakers or select and catalogue materials, tasks typically performed by trained librarians for other users. This means that in some cases non-English speakers do not receive the same professional quality of public library services as English speakers.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Even if libraries choose to adapt to diversity, determine how, and find the resources, they face a final obstacle: It is hard to know when they have succeeded. To illustrate this measurement problem, we characterize the responsive library, in a racially diverse or homogeneous community, as follows:

- The library knows what information and other resources its community members want and use, keeping in touch with its community (not just users) and involving them in planning and role setting.
- It informs the community of its services and the potential benefits to individuals in different situations.
- It determines what physical, psychological, temporal, or cultural barriers potential users might face and addresses them within its means.
- It knows who uses and does not use the library and why.
- It reflects all of this knowledge in its collection, staffing patterns, and service modes.

The responsive library may still find that, even over the long term, a higher percentage of a particular group in the community chooses to use its services. Other potential users have made an informed choice not to do so and are not hindered by significant barriers.

This responsive library would measure its success in community-wide surveys of users and nonusers. It would combine the results with multiple measures of library usage, such as: circulation per capita, reference transactions per capita, in-house use per capita, speed of document delivery, library visits per capita, reference completion rate, registered users as percentage of population, user satisfaction, program attendance per capita, turnover rates for subcollections, and various fill rates.[20]

All of this takes significant time and resources, and few libraries choose to use their resources in this way. None of our case study librarians knew how the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic characteristics of their users compared with nonusers. No librarians we interviewed had data on why users came to their library, what they were looking for, and whether they found it. (Some of our interviewees reported knowing some of this information, but this information was sometimes several years old.) Most libraries appear to rely on crude performance measures and many of them do not even allocate resources to evaluate the data they do collect.[21] Even fewer are able to conduct careful evaluations of particular changes in collections or services to test their effectiveness. We found that the evaluations that are done, even of federally sponsored projects requiring such evaluations, are difficult to find.

Due to this obstacle, libraries have difficulty answering such questions as "Is what we are doing effective?" "Are we eliminating barriers to access for residents of our communities?" "How are we affecting our long-time users?" "Are we doing enough or too much for particular users, given our limited resources?" Sometimes, though, due to such strong responses from users and former nonusers, interviewees reported knowing their successes without an evaluation process. For example, in one case study library, the response to a new service for Hispanics was so strongly positive and immediate, that the library declared it a success and began expanding it. Another library reported that it had such high circulation of books in Vietnamese, it considered any investment in such books a success. Even in these cases, though, the libraries did not have a sense of how much was enough or how to measure and trade off one service against another.

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[20] McClure, 1987, pp. 85–86. A fill rate is the proportion of titles requested that are successfully found (title fill rate) or the proportion of subject and author searches successfully completed (subject and author fill rate).

[21] Our case study libraries typically measured dimensions of use, and much less frequently, why nonusers don't use them. They relied generally on measures of circulation, reference contacts, and registered users. Most of the state's public libraries also report to the State Library weekly visits and in-library use, database searches, interlibrary loans, and program attendance. These measures are being added to the State Library's annual report on public library statistics for 1987.

A few interviewees reported frustration, having used precious resources to enhance a particular collection or start a new service, without knowing if they were successful or whether they had reallocated resources effectively.

VII. ACTIONS TO FACILITATE CHANGE WHERE NEEDED

For libraries needing to adapt to ethnic and racial diversity but facing the obstacles described in Sec. VI, we suggest they consider five sets of actions:

- Engage the community in the process of determining the library's mission and roles and inform it of the library's potential; then turn to it regularly for feedback.
- Clarify and limit roles and set measurable goals, then concentrate on them.
- Focus on service: informing the public, improving accessibility, focusing on youth.
- Measure and evaluate performance and take action or stop action where indicated.
- Work with other libraries and organizations to share scarce resources, tap others' expertise, reach potential users, and try new techniques.

How each library acts will depend on the particular minorities the library serves, what the entire community (including the minorities) wants from the library, and what the library is doing now. We describe each action below.

ENGAGE COMMUNITIES

To determine if and how a library needs to change and gain the support needed to make changes, a library can work with its entire community to determine what the community wants and how to translate its mission into action within its limited resources. This does not mean the library conducts a needs assessment of its community, chronicling its population's demographic characteristics, or sets up a new community support group. Most public libraries already do these tasks to a greater or lesser extent. We suggest that the library go beyond to work with the entire community—elected officials, individuals, leaders of community groups, and other service agencies:

- Inform them of the richness of the library's potential roles and services within its mission and involve them in making the necessary choices and tradeoffs.

- Determine how the library fits in the community, given the community's pressing problems and highest priorities.
- Turn to them regularly and substantively to evaluate progress and direction.

Libraries should involve those who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity in the community and include nonusers as well as users and individual residents as well as organizational representatives.

In working with its community, the library may find that it already provides what its community wants. Or it may be pressured to change in ways it would not have chosen otherwise. But it will no longer have to rely on its internal assessments of what its community wants or "needs," without the benefit of input from community members making informed choices about how they would like the library to serve them.

One of our case study libraries appeared to be engaging its community successfully and on an ongoing basis, not only during a formal planning process. It did so by keeping its more senior staff involved with various community groups and schools. Its director and assistant director reported spending considerable time with community groups and city department heads, finding ways to explain how the library could help residents or learning about information useful to particular groups of residents. Although this library had not developed a comprehensive plan for several years, it had made many adjustments to services and collections in response to community interests. For example, it shifted its service hours in some branches, it enhanced a collection of religious materials in another, extended a summer reading program to a year-round program, increased and displayed more prominently books for new readers (adults and teenagers, not children), and moved a branch into a shopping mall thereby increasing circulation.

CLARIFY AND LIMIT ROLES

Once it has engaged its community, the public library will probably need to clarify and limit its roles, develop measurable goals and deadlines, and hold someone accountable for reaching them. Several interviewees suggested that the roles emphasized can vary by service outlet, with different outlets offering different services. Given the characteristics of California's growing minority population and the library's mission, libraries may choose to emphasize roles related to students, young and old, such as study centers for children and adolescents. Interviewees reported that some libraries have devoted entire service outlets to support students. One of our case study libraries had done so with a book mobile, which appeared to be well used by new users.

The public library cannot provide all services the public wants and do so well. It cannot rank roles without explicitly choosing what it will not do or what it will do much less of. "Priorities are easy, posteriorities—what jobs not to tackle—are tough."[1] The library can resist roles and actions inappropriate to its mission, even if pressured to do so or even if the result will be more diverse users. Selecting a role outside of its mission that would increase minority usership is a disservice to the public—minority or otherwise—wanting services appropriate to libraries. Under scrutiny, this may lead to a loss of trust and reduced support from elected officials and the public. For example, providing popular video cassettes may increase circulation and attract new users, but some interviewees questioned what type of cassette collection fits within the library's mission or whether this was a cost-effective use of limited collection budgets. Others questioned whether a library should provide multiple copies of bestsellers when it sets aside few resources for outreach.

One interviewee suggested it would be useful for libraries to identify serving minorities as a special concern to be assigned to a particular person or staff group. This person or group could serve as the focus for adaptation, helping the entire library to assess how it functions: plans, provides services, develops collections. It could also help the library develop closer ties with minority residents in the community.

FOCUS ON SERVICE: INFORMING PUBLIC, ACCESSIBILITY, YOUTH

If a library serves minorities unfamiliar with libraries or without cultural traditions of using them, it may need to emphasize changing how it provides service: informing its community of the library's benefits and use; and making its facilities and services understandable, accessible, comfortable, and easy to use by new users. If the library's minorities are relatively younger than the general population (as is generally true in the state), emphasizing services to youth will likely be a good strategy. (By "youth" we mean those under 20 years, not only those in elementary school.) Such younger users are more likely to be in school or starting employment, so libraries could consider roles that reflect this. One such role suggested by interviewees is a study center for students. Several interviewees reported that targeting services to children was an effective way to reach their families, who may be unfamiliar with what a library offers due to cultural traditions.

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[1] Attributed to Peter Drucker, in Martin, 1983.

If a library decides to increase its service orientation, such a change needs to be reflected in the library's internal policies, procedures, and budget process. One case study library reported doing this by rewriting its staff promotion exams. It also changed its hiring procedures to test how well applicants could handle racial tensions and work with other races. A librarian at another case study library suggested that libraries could select professional staff, first, with strong service orientations, then teach them library skills intensively.

Several libraries reported that training programs in cultural sensitivity and awareness helped change staff orientations. This type of training may be especially helpful to librarians, for they deal with the diverse public in group settings more directly and more often than most public servants. This means they are called on to handle inevitable misunderstandings and tensions between users.

For four reasons, public libraries cannot rely primarily on minority librarians to serve minorities or provide bilingual skills. First, there are not enough minority librarians. Second, common racial or ethnic identities alone cannot guarantee that the staff member has a service orientation needed to serve the particular group of minorities. Third, it would be difficult for individual staff members of any race to overcome systematic obstacles in a library's internal processes to serving minorities. Fourth, minority librarians, like their colleagues, deserve a fuller range of professional options.

To increase minority and bilingual staff serving the public and address the shortage of degreed librarians, libraries could try offering alternative routes for staff advancement to responsible positions. As one interviewee suggested above, this could be done by selecting current or new staff with the proper service orientation, then using a carefully monitored and rigorous learning process to teach library service skills.

Adapting to diversity does not necessarily mean increased expenditures, if tradeoffs are made between existing services and new ones. Also, a shift in orientation can be done relatively cheaply in some cases. There are many simple ways to improve accessibility for new users and minorities.[2] Interviewees also described ways libraries use relatively inexpensive computer applications and phone or telefax methods to enhance service to minorities and bridge language gaps. For example, some libraries use telefax to provide basic reference services to some branches. If found cost effective, this method could bring reference material in foreign languages from a specialized source to many service outlets. Micro computers could also be used to provide basic catalogue information for non-English collections or answers to basic reference questions in the appropriate language, even in the vernacular Asian language characters.[3] Or an electronic mail network could allow users to ask and receive answers to basic reference questions in their own languages, through links to specialists elsewhere.

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[2] See, for example, Barker, 1982.

A community information base could be set up on a micro computer, allowing users to make queries themselves. It could operate as a stand-alone system, with one person updating the database monthly and distributing the changes on diskettes. Such a database, or at least parts of it, could be provided with an electronic interface in Spanish. Also, public access catalogues for libraries are now available and could fairly easily have alternative user interfaces in, say, Spanish. (Such an alternative interface would be much more difficult in some Asian languages because of their vernacular characters.)

Based on our interviews and analysis, we find that public libraries have just started to tap the potential of these media to serve their users; like most organizations to date, they have used these media to improve only internal management and operations.

Finally, more libraries can adapt marketing techniques to help them reach their entire communities, select appropriate roles, and inform potential users of ways libraries can help, as interviewees report some are doing. Such techniques need not focus on a small set of current users. One of our case study libraries was experimenting with several such marketing techniques to attract new users, but it had not yet evaluated the effectiveness of such techniques. One interviewee suggested a way to better inform the public and elected officials of a library's information services: A library could have a column in the local newspaper describing the user it helped most each week or month.[4]

If a library decides to reorient its services and collection, it will need to reduce what it spends on current activities, even if the changes can be done fairly cheaply. This means that the library will need to decide which services or subcollections will have lower budgets or no budgets at all, which user requests may have to be denied, or which plans for future projects will be postponed or scrapped.

Of course, each public library faces a different ethnic and racial diversity and different community desires. Hence, if, how, and to what extent services need to change will vary.

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[3] Members of a minority librarian association in cooperation with a cooperative library system are now developing a proposal for such a reference application in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean.

[4] Interview with Dr. Brenda Dervin, Department of Communications, Ohio State University, February 5, 1988.

MEASURE, EVALUATE PERFORMANCE, AND ACT

Once libraries have clarified their roles and set goals to serve their diverse populations, they may want to find practical ways to monitor performance against goals and evaluate the results. The American Library Association's revised planning and role-setting process offers advice on how to do so.[5] To keep in touch with nonusers, libraries can turn outside to the entire community to measure and evaluate more often what nonusers as well as users want and think about library services.

Just as any well-managed organization, libraries must act on what they learn. If a program or service is not effectively and efficiently serving the library's purpose, the library should consider whether to stop it, not only consider ways to improve it. Services and collections may lose their usefulness over time, so such rigor should not be applied only to new programs and collections.

This effort at self-control and feedback is especially important if a library is to remain responsive and provide quality service as its community changes.

WORK WITH OTHER LIBRARIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Public libraries already work with each other, with other types of libraries, other organizations, and with the state to provide services, support each other, and develop and manage their collections. Increasing ethnic and racial diversity adds more reasons to do so. There already are 15 cooperative public library systems in the state and a variety of other formal groups and networks to facilitate cooperation.

Before suggesting where linkages may be most useful to meet challenges posed by ethnic and racial diversity, it is useful to review the reasons libraries may need to work with others:

- To share scarce materials and expertise (e.g., non-English materials, language proficiency, where to find scarce materials)
- To tap others' understanding of diverse cultures and minority populations and their implications for libraries (e.g., from universities and special public library resource centers)
- To learn from others how to adapt, how to manage the change process, and what techniques work well
- To reach potential users

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[5] McClure, 1987.

- To experiment with new techniques
- To avoid duplication with other organizations with mutual or overlapping goals

Interviewees reported that most existing cooperative efforts do not directly address these reasons for linkages. Several mentioned that the few important exceptions to this included Asian Shared Information & Access (ASIA) and the efforts made by a few minority librarian organizations in the state. ASIA helps libraries select and catalogue appropriate Asian language materials. The minority professional groups provide professional support for minorities and others serving minority populations and help improve access to scarce expertise and materials. For example, they share lists of vendors and collection guidelines for books in non-English languages. They also serve as catalysts for and sometimes participants in projects to improve services to minorities, such as a review of reference services to the Spanish speaking and a support program for minority library students. Despite these contributions, according to interviewees, their members sometimes have to participate on their own time and at their own expense, not supported by the libraries where they work.

Below we suggest linkages among public libraries themselves, and among public libraries and schools, universities, other agencies, and the state. Some of these linkages already exist but may need to be strengthened or restructured to address particular problems. Our suggestions do not assume a particular organizational framework for this support, but, rather, focus on where the most effective direct links might be. For example, we do not suggest a particular role for the state's cooperative system structure, but suggest where libraries may benefit from working with each other, one-on-one or as groups. These links may or may not be with libraries in geographic proximity to each other, as cooperative systems are defined.[6]

Links Between Public Libraries

Public libraries themselves, not library support organizations or the state, are in the best position to learn what their communities want and how they are changing. They are the natural test beds for new ideas and have the most skills and direct experience serving diverse communities. The state's largest public libraries have staff members who can try new approaches and evaluate results. Hence public libraries are in a good position to share directly with each other, so library-to-library linkages may be the most useful links for helping public libraries determine if and, if so, how they need to respond to ethnic and racial diversity.

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[6] Generally, the state's cooperative public library systems concentrate on facilitating interlibrary loans and providing reference referral services, neither of which address the primary reasons for libraries to work together to address ethnic and racial diversity. Some also provide training for members, joint planning efforts, shared circulation systems and acquisition and cataloguing centers, and an organizational framework to conduct special programs funded by grants (California State Library, 1987b).

Public libraries can work together one-to-one or as groups to share limited materials and expertise, learn how to adapt from each other, experiment with new techniques, and jointly develop needed service tools. One-to-one links could be particularly helpful where libraries are challenged to serve groups of users who want unusual types or forms of information, such as minorities with unique languages or cultural traditions. The Hmong population settling in certain central valley communities presents unusual challenges. They had no written language until recently, and their cultural traditions made the sudden transition to California living especially challenging.

One-to-one links could also allow libraries that have succeeded with various adaptations to help other libraries during the change process, not just by providing them with "products" of successful approaches. For example, a library that had developed a successful year-round reading program for children in a low-income, minority neighborhood, might help another library tailor the program to its community and implement it. It might give the library advice on how to contact schools or how to involve the childrens' families. This type of help in the change process is quite different from one library simply giving the products of its innovative approaches to another (perhaps giving the recipient library the leaflets describing the year-round program to schools or the forms the library used to keep track of the books each child reads).

Public libraries could work in groups as well, defined geographically or by the characteristics of populations they served or the roles they have chosen. Geographic links could facilitate sharing scarce staff skills or materials used directly by users. Proximity is more important in such cases to maximize user accessibility. Libraries across the state, not defined geographically, may find many useful ways to work in permanent or temporary groups to share tools and expertise to address common situations. Such group linkages could still concentrate on direct library-to-library contacts, but could include contacts from one library to many others.

All linkages need not depend only on goodwill between libraries. Four of the case study libraries had used significant resources to develop program material and skills that other libraries might find useful. Some interviewees expressed concern that other libraries could take advantage of their skills and experience and specialized collections and services without contributing to the costs of developing them. As they are doing now, libraries should experiment with ways to contract with each other to provide specialized expertise or services.

Library-to-library links could take full advantage of available communications media, e.g., phones, telefax transmission, and electronic networks, where efficient and cost effective. For example, public librarians might use electronic mail with interest group or bulletin board capabilities to communicate quickly with others on a particular topic, review and perhaps print out copies of useful resources already available, and learn who had products or skills they were willing to share.[7] A librarian in a community with a new group of Chilean immigrants might check with an appropriate interest group's shared electronic files to find the best regional sources of books on Chile in English or Spanish, a list of prominent Chilean authors, a summary of Chilean cultural traditions relating to libraries, or librarians or other experts willing to share various expertise or service techniques with others (for free or for a fee). Then, the librarian might send an electronic message to other libraries in the electronic interest group to ask if anyone had conducted a program on Chilean literature or culture.

Electronic mail interest groups might also be set up to link libraries developing particular roles, such as homework centers for students or working on cross-agency solutions to the growing number of latch key children. Many of the resources that could be shared in electronic networks are already available somewhere in the state but are not easily accessible to the libraries that need them.

Public Libraries and Schools

The state's public schools must serve increasing enrollments within the severe fiscal limitations imposed by state law. Concurrently, they are implementing a series of major reforms to strengthen curriculum and improve student achievement.[8] But public school libraries have been called the "stepchild" of this reform effort, struggling with dwindling financial resources.[9] Between fiscal years 1982 and 1986, they suffered a 23 percent decline in librarians, 36 percent at the elementary school level.[10] And in 1986, California had the highest percentage of school libraries operating without certificated staff of any state.[11] These conditions directly affect public libraries as more students turn to them for services, materials, and skill development traditionally provided by school libraries.

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[7] According to Ronald Miller, the director of CLASS, such capabilities are now available, but rarely used, on Ontyme, the electronic mail service most of the state's public libraries now use at least to a limited extent.

[8] PACE, 1988.

[9] Brandes, 1987, p. 4.

Public libraries alone cannot fill the gap left by the dramatic decline of the state's school libraries. But many students wanting to use libraries will turn to public libraries because of the gap. This student population is the most ethnically and racially diverse of any age group in the state. Hence, by working with schools to address students' library needs, a library could serve a significant group of minorities and introduce itself to nonusers. It could also find ways to reach the students' families, many of whom may not be familiar with libraries.

Within the limits of their mission and resources, libraries could coordinate with schools ways to address problems affecting both institutions, such as high drop-out rates, child care shortages, and low English language proficiency.

Public Libraries and Universities

University librarians we interviewed reported that few public libraries take advantage of university staff expertise, language skills, and collections to understand demographic trends and cultural traditions of particular minorities. They said public libraries rarely used these resources, despite some university librarians' efforts to point out such resources to them in letters, notices, and informal contacts.

University staff may be able to help public libraries determine how to tailor roles, collections, services, and programs to reflect a deep understanding of minorities' experiences and perspectives. They could also help libraries correctly translate materials to help users in more obscure languages.

According to some interviewees, public libraries could also collaborate more with the library schools at the state universities to experiment with new service techniques, evaluate new and old ones, and develop training needed for staff serving ethnically and racially diverse populations with varying characteristics.

Public libraries and universities could examine where the most useful links between them are, how to translate relevant university resources into forms useful to public libraries, and what medium would be most appropriate to make the connections (e.g., electronic communication, periodic visits, a conference or workshop, or written material). If such links are to be enhanced, university libraries' incentives for developing them should be examined. Interviewees at universities mentioned that university libraries today had little incentive to provide such support and, in some cases, feared that they would be overwhelmed with requests for support if they began providing it to public libraries. As mentioned above, formal service agreements between public libraries and universities may help address this problem.

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[10] Ibid., p. 2.

[11] Ibid., p. 2.

Public Libraries and Other Agencies and Public Media

Public libraries individually or together can find new ways to work with other public and private organizations and the public media to reach potential users in their communities and understand what is wanted from libraries. These other organizations may also determine ways to help libraries know what the community wants. For example, one case study library reported working with churches with primarily minority congregations to inform individuals of what the library offers and determine how they might be best served by the library. Some community groups have stepped forward to help libraries serve their members better and more conveniently.

Libraries can also work with other organizations to inform nonusers about potential benefits to them of library use. These organizations include agencies providing immigrant services and community radio stations and newspapers serving minorities in particular. For example, one librarian at a case study library reported strong responses by community residents each time she listed new acquisitions in Asian languages in local Asian language papers. The papers were willing to print her announcements and include articles about her services.

Public Libraries and the State

The state now supports linkages between libraries in various ways. In fiscal year 1988 alone, it budgeted over $3.5 million for continued work on a statewide electronic database of public library collections, public library cooperative systems' communications and delivery of intrasystem loans, and backup reference services for public libraries.[12] We did not evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts. Here, we suggest ways in which the state could particularly help libraries adapt to ethnic and racial diversity:

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[12] Analysis of California Library Services Act Budget, Fiscal Year 1987-1988, by Cameron Robertson, California State Library.

- Encourage and help libraries focus on their mission and define appropriate roles with measurable goals.

This could include helping to develop alternative service models for communities or neighborhoods with particular sets of characteristics, such as low-median income, a high proportion of school-aged children, and many recent Mexican immigrants.

- Make products, successes, and evaluations of experimental projects readily available to all.

Based on our interviews, this is not systematically done now. Both the results of projects funded by grants administered by the State Library as well as projects funded directly by individual public libraries or groups of libraries should be made available.

- Facilitate direct links between experienced libraries and others to share scarce materials and expertise.

These may be one-to-one links or group links discussed above. They may be based on goodwill or service agreements between libraries, explicitly recognizing the value of what is being shared.

- Help fund promising experiments in serving minority groups or the infrastructures of any needed statewide networks.

The State Library already does so with the grant programs it administers. We suggest it evaluate how the allocation of these funds directly affects how ethnically and racially diverse communities are served.

- Facilitate more efficient and effective use of public library resources through joint planning, joint development of common tools, and improved budget techniques for individual public libraries.

The budget techniques could help libraries move away from the incremental approach that appears to be most commonly used. They could include practical ways to reflect more rigorous evaluations and comparisons of the cost effectiveness of old and new collection policies, services, and programs.

VIII. CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

This report serves as a background paper and a starting point for a statewide conference on the implications to public libraries of the state's increasing ethnic and racial diversity. One of its purposes is to clarify what is known and not known about these implications and whether libraries have addressed them. Therefore, we end the report by posing seven sets of questions to the conferees and to those interested in how libraries serve California's racially and ethnically diverse public.

1. Does the public library's broad mission need to be reaffirmed or revised, given the state's growing ethnic and racial diversity? Given its mission and direct accessibility to so many Californians should the public library assume a lead role in helping all Californians, minority or otherwise, to figure how to live well together, taking advantage of the strengths of diversity and minimizing distrust and divisiveness?

2. How can each local library measure whether minorities in its community face access barriers to library use? To do this, they cannot merely measure the disparity between the characteristics of their library users and the general population. They need to determine whether this is the result of such barriers or informed choices. Should this measurement be done statewide so libraries can see where other libraries face challenges similar to theirs? How can such measurement be done to help libraries determine the best ways to eliminate any barriers identified?

3. What can libraries do to engage their total constituency in setting objectives and choosing roles and service emphases? How can officials and other local leaders better understand the library's mission, potential roles, and alternative ways to fulfill them?

4. What can community members (nonusers and users, elected officials, policymakers, and others interested in libraries) do to let libraries know the roles they wish them to play? How can this process be facilitated?

5. What are the costs and benefits of changes libraries may propose to make in response to ethnic and racial diversity? How will libraries make the needed tradeoffs between old and new services, between alternative collection decisions, between current and new users?

6. How should libraries define "success" in serving pluralistic communities? If a library finds it needs to change, how much change is

enough? What performance measures are more important? Can libraries realistically use them to monitor themselves?

7. How can libraries in California work together to serve their diverse constituencies more cost effectively? Are current state organizational networks appropriate? What should the state emphasize in its funding to support cooperation; what should its role be? What should be the roles of others?

Appendix A

ETHNIC AND RACIAL PROFILES OF CALIFORNIA COUNTIES, 1985, 2000

			Percentage Distribution by Race/Ethnicity				
County	Year	Total Population (1,000s)	Non-Hispanic White	Minority	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Other
Alameda	1985	1197.0	58	42	13	18	12
	2000	1323.7	48	52	16	16	19
Alpine	1985	1.2	75	25	0	0	25
	2000	1.6	63	37	0	0	37
Amador	1985	23.4	91	9	5	1	3
	2000	33.3	86	14	7	1	5
Butte	1985	164.0	89	11	6	1	4
	2000	202.6	83	17	8	1	8
Calaveras	1985	26.8	92	8	5	0	3
	2000	42.8	87	13	7	0	5
Colusa	1985	14.7	70	30	22	1	8
	2000	19.4	60	40	27	1	13
Contra Costa	1985	717.6	74	26	10	9	8
	2000	870.6	66	34	13	9	13
Del Norte	1985	18.8	82	18	7	0	11
	2000	20.8	73	27	9	0	19
El Dorado	1985	104.7	91	9	5	0	3
	2000	158.5	86	14	7	0	6
Fresno	1985	576.2	58	42	32	5	6
	2000	734.0	48	52	39	4	9
Glenn	1985	23.2	83	17	14	0	3
	2000	28.0	76	24	18	0	6
Humboldt	1985	113.0	86	14	4	1	9
	2000	120.0	78	22	5	1	16
Imperial	1985	106.0	35	65	59	2	4
	2000	143.0	27	73	66	2	5

			Percentage Distribution by Race/Ethnicity				
County	Year	Total Population (1,000s)	Non-Hispanic White	Minority	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Other
Inyo	1985	18.4	81	19	7	0	12
	2000	18.8	71	29	9	0	20
Kern	1985	480.6	66	34	24	5	5
	2000	662.6	57	43	30	5	8
Kings	1985	84.9	60	40	30	5	6
	2000	116.2	50	50	36	4	9
Lake	1985	48.3	89	11	6	1	4
	2000	80.9	83	17	8	1	8
Lassen	1985	24.6	84	16	7	3	6
	2000	29.5	76	24	10	3	11
Los Angeles	1985	8085.3	49	51	30	12	9
	2000	9132.6	40	60	36	11	14
Madera	1985	76.3	63	37	30	3	4
	2000	115.5	53	47	37	3	7
Marin	1985	226.1	88	12	5	2	5
	2000	236.5	82	18	7	3	9
Mariposa	1985	13.4	89	11	5	1	5
	2000	20.3	82	18	7	1	9
Mendocino	1985	73.8	87	13	6	1	6
	2000	92.2	80	20	9	1	10
Merced	1985	160.5	63	37	28	5	4
	2000	238.2	53	47	35	4	7
Modoc	1985	9.5	91	9	5	0	4
	2000	11.7	85	15	8	0	7
Mono	1985	9.3	88	12	5	0	7
	2000	10.6	81	19	7	0	12
Monterey	1985	329.7	55	45	28	6	11
	2000	424.3	45	55	33	6	17
Napa	1985	104.0	84	16	10	1	5
	2000	123.2	77	23	13	1	8
Nevada	1985	68.3	93	7	4	0	3
	2000	113.8	89	11	5	0	5
Orange	1985	2127.9	74	26	16	1	8
	2000	2599.2	65	35	21	1	13
Placer	1985	138.4	88	12	8	0	4
	2000	203.7	82	18	11	0	7

			Percentage Distribution by Race/Ethnicity				
County	Year	Total Population (1,000s)	Non-Hispanic White	Minority	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Other
Plumas	1985	19.2	90	10	4	1	5
	2000	23.8	84	16	6	1	9
Riverside	1985	820.6	71	29	21	5	4
	2000	1350.0	62	38	27	4	6
Sacramento	1985	893.8	73	27	11	7	9
	2000	1184.0	64	36	14	7	15
San Benito	1985	30.5	47	53	49	0	4
	2000	48.7	37	63	57	0	6
San Bernardino	1985	1086.4	70	30	21	5	4
	2000	1661.0	61	39	27	5	7
San Diego	1985	2131.6	70	30	16	5	8
	2000	2852.5	61	39	21	5	13
San Francisco	1985	735.0	47	53	13	11	29
	2000	763.8	35	65	14	9	42
San Joaquin	1985	416.7	64	36	21	5	10
	2000	612.0	53	47	26	5	16
San Luis Obispo	1985	190.1	83	17	11	2	5
	2000	302.2	75	25	15	2	8
San Mateo	1985	616.6	67	33	14	6	14
	2000	656.9	56	44	17	5	23
Santa Barbara	1985	334.6	71	29	21	3	5
	2000	407.4	62	38	26	2	9
Santa Clara	1985	1400.1	66	34	19	3	12
	2000	1640.0	55	45	23	3	19
Santa Cruz	1985	214.3	78	22	16	1	5
	2000	286.1	69	31	22	1	8
Shasta	1985	131.7	92	8	3	1	4
	2000	179.6	87	13	5	1	7
Sierra	1985	3.5	88	12	9	0	6
	2000	4.1	83	17	10	0	8
Siskiyou	1985	42.8	87	13	5	1	6
	2000	47.1	81	19	7	2	10
Solano	1985	275.2	66	34	12	11	11
	2000	391.4	56	44	15	11	18
Sonoma	1985	335.4	87	13	8	1	4
	2000	429.1	81	19	11	1	7

			Percentage Distribution by Race/Ethnicity				
County	Year	Total Population (1,000s)	Non-Hispanic White	Minority	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Other
Stanislaus	1985	304.9	77	23	17	1	5
	2000	418.2	68	32	22	1	8
Sutter	1985	58.5	75	25	13	1	11
	2000	72.0	64	36	16	1	19
Tehama	1985	44.3	90	10	6	0	4
	2000	59.6	84	16	9	0	7
Trinity	1985	13.6	89	11	3	0	9
	2000	16.9	81	19	4	0	15
Tulare	1985	280.5	61	39	33	1	5
	2000	393.4	51	49	40	1	8
Tuolumne	1985	40.8	90	10	6	1	3
	2000	64.6	85	15	8	1	5
Ventura	1985	600.2	69	31	24	2	5
	2000	784.5	59	41	30	2	9
Yolo	1985	124.0	71	29	19	2	8
	2000	152.2	61	39	24	2	13
Yuba	1985	54.3	78	22	10	4	7
	2000	63.2	70	30	13	4	13
Total in	1985	26365.0	63	37	21	7	9
California	2000	32853.0	55	45	25	6	14

SOURCES: Total population: Population Research Unit, 1986; percentage of population: Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1987.

NOTE: The county-level percentage distribution of population by race and ethnicity in this appendix is not consistent with the state-level distributions reported in Sec. IV, because the county-level distribution has not been updated to be consistent with the State Department of Finance projections in Population Research Unit, 1988.

Appendix B

ETHNIC SERVICES CONFERENCE STUDY COMMITTEE

California State Librarian Gary E. Strong appointed this study committee to plan a statewide conference on the implications for libraries of the state's growing ethnic and racial diversity. The committee served as advisers for this RAND study.

Roberto Trujillo, Committee Co-Chair
Curator of Chicano Collections
Stanford University

Yolanda J. Cuesta, Committee Co-Chair
Chief, Library Development Services Bureau
California State Library

Luis Herrera
Associate Director, Branch Libraries
Long Beach Public Library

Rhonda Rios Kravitz
Ethnic Services Consultant
California State Library

Elizabeth Martinez Smith
County Librarian, Orange County Public Library

Rosalie McKay-Want, Librarian
Native American Library
University of California, Berkeley

Kate Seifert, Director
Asian Shared Information & Access (ASIA)
Huntington Park, California

Lelia White
Director, Oakland Public Library

Binnie Tate Wilkins
Program Administrator
Orange County Public Library

Appendix C

GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF CALIFORNIA'S MINORITIES, 1985, 2000

The following three sets of maps show the geographic concentration of certain minorities in California in 1985 and 2000 by county.[1] Maps 1 and 2 show the concentration of Asians, including other races not separately projected by the California State Department of Finance or the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy. Maps 3 and 4 show the concentration of Hispanics. Maps 5 and 6 show the concentration of three minority groups combined: Asians/other, Hispanics, and blacks.

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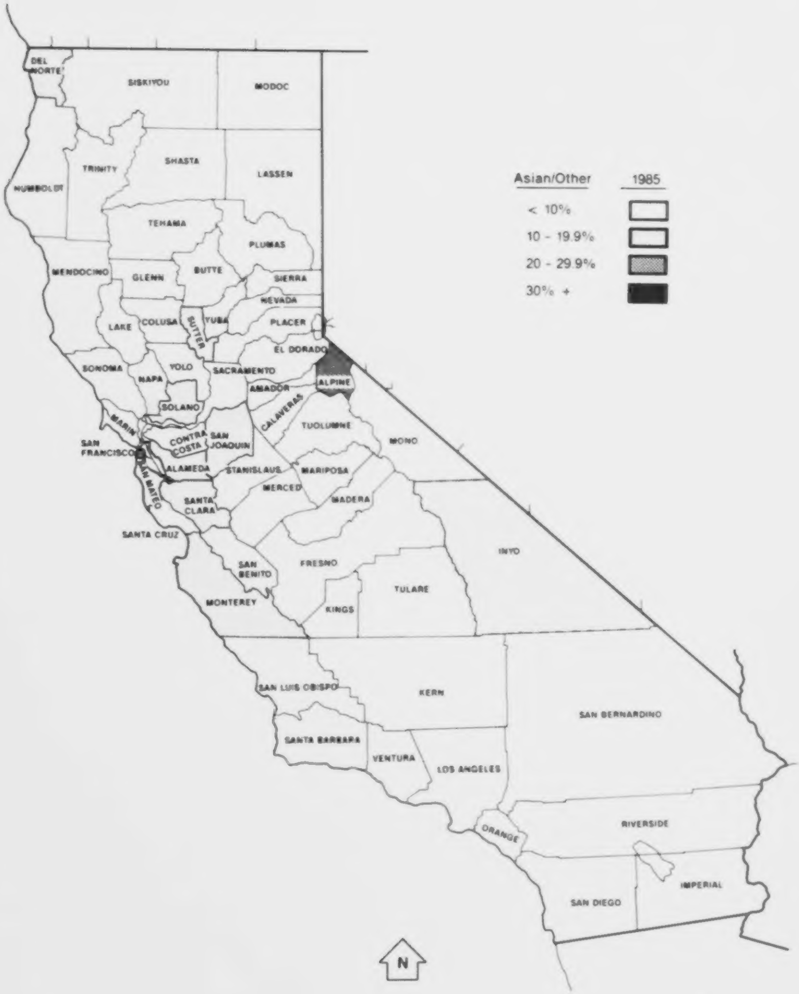
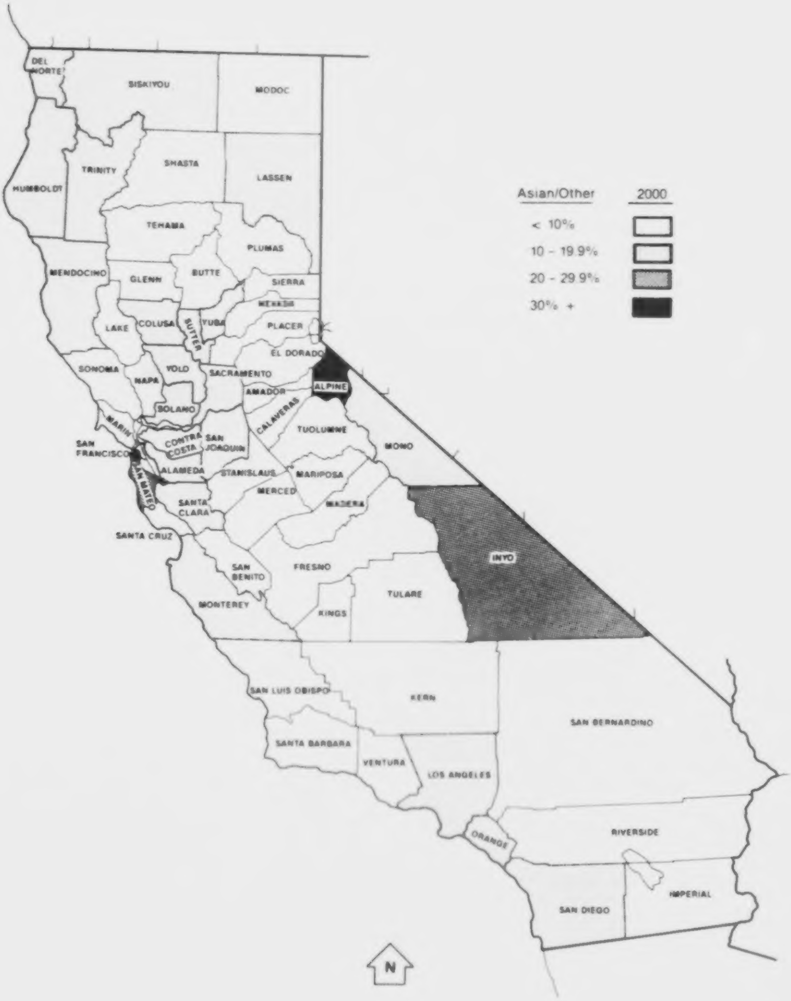
[1] Derived from California Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, unpublished tables, October 1987.



SOURCE: Based on projections by the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1987.

NOTE: Asians/other includes Asians and all races other than whites and blacks. It excludes Hispanics of any race.

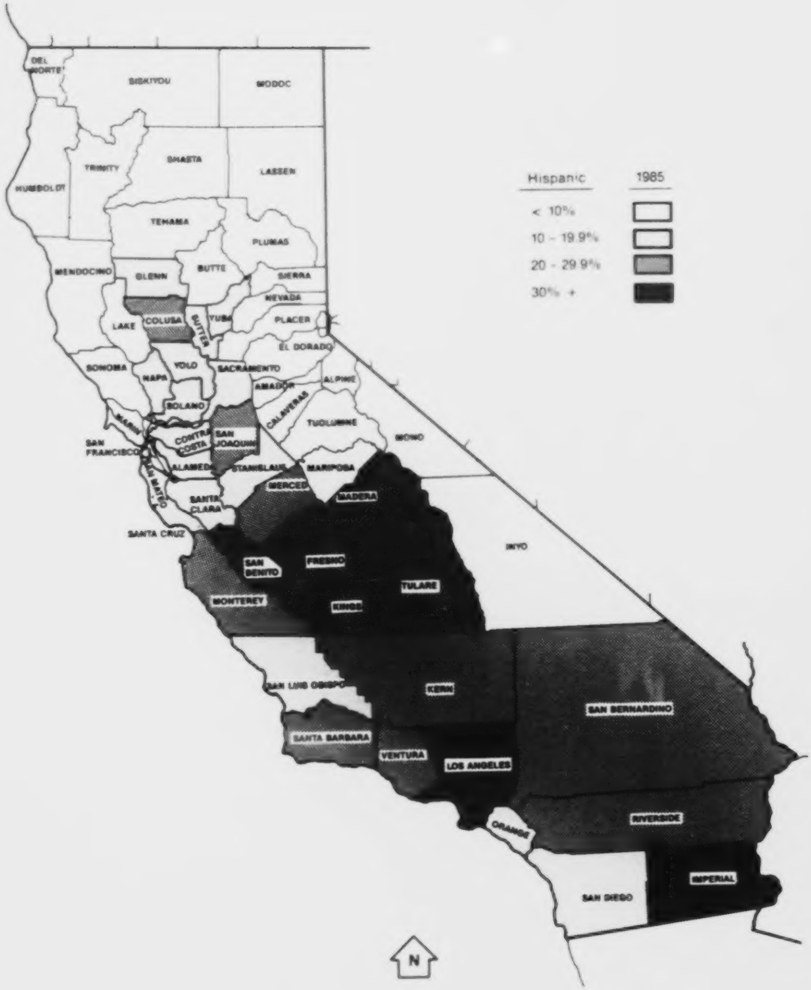
Map 1—Concentration of Asians/other by county, 1985



SOURCE: Based on projections by the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1987.

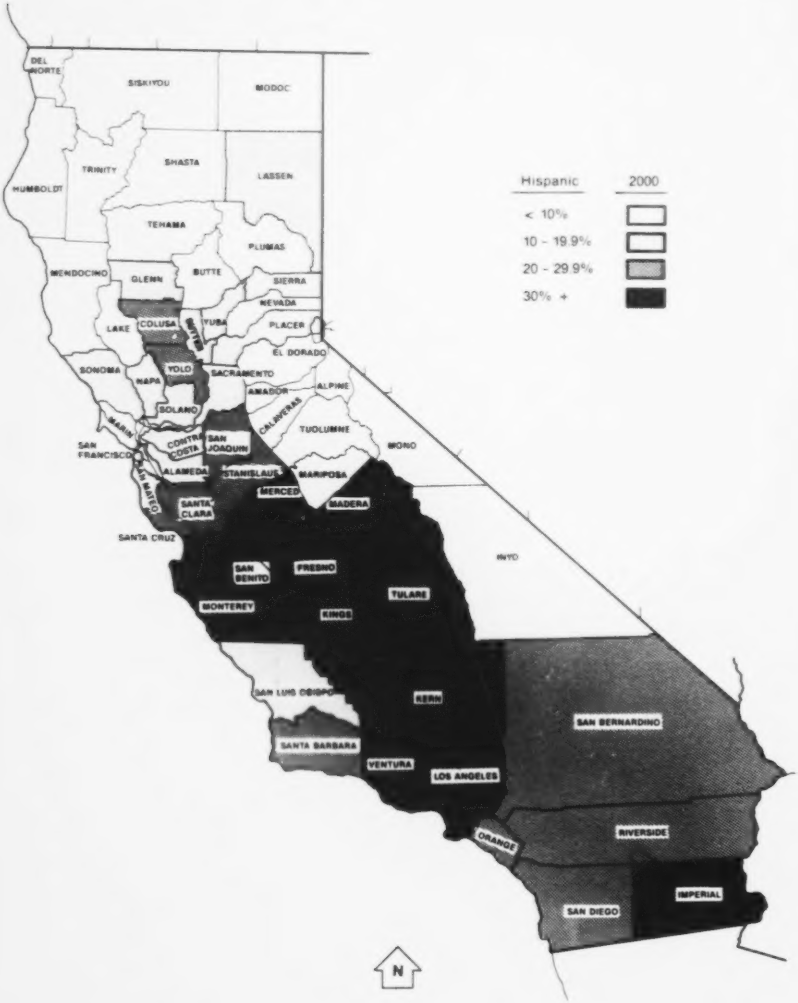
NOTE: Asians/other includes Asians and all races other than whites and blacks. It excludes Hispanics of any race.

Map 2—Concentration of Asians/other by county, 2000



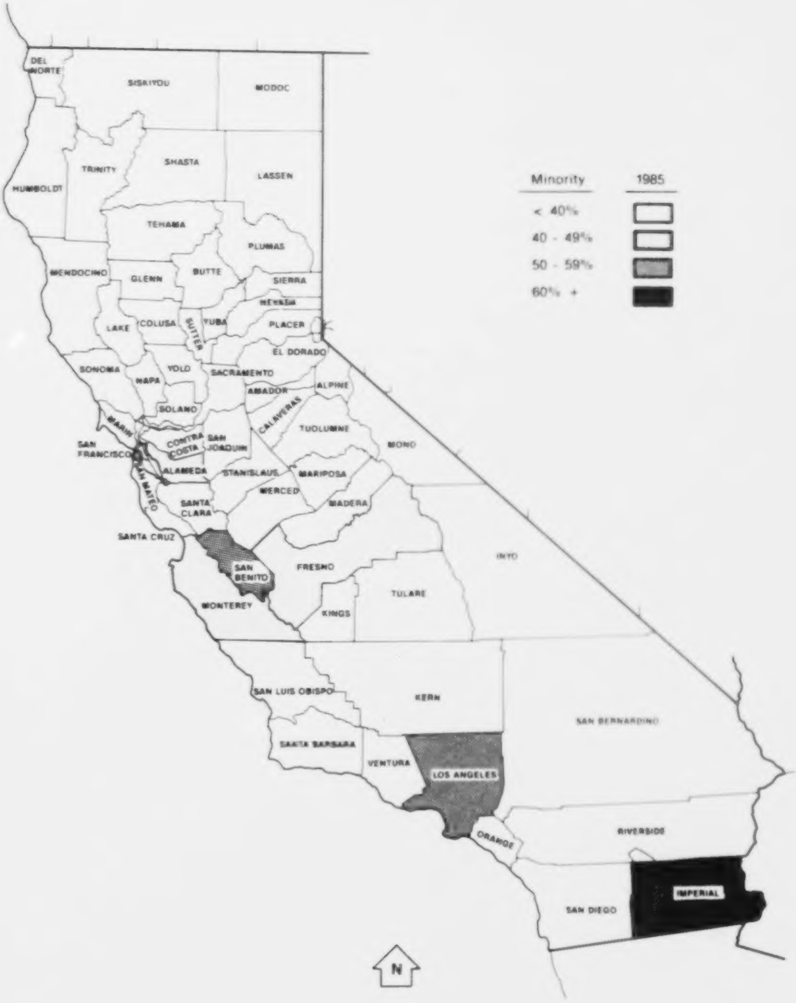
SOURCE: Based on projections by the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1987.

Map 3—Concentration of Hispanics by county, 1985



SOURCE: Based on projections by the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1987.

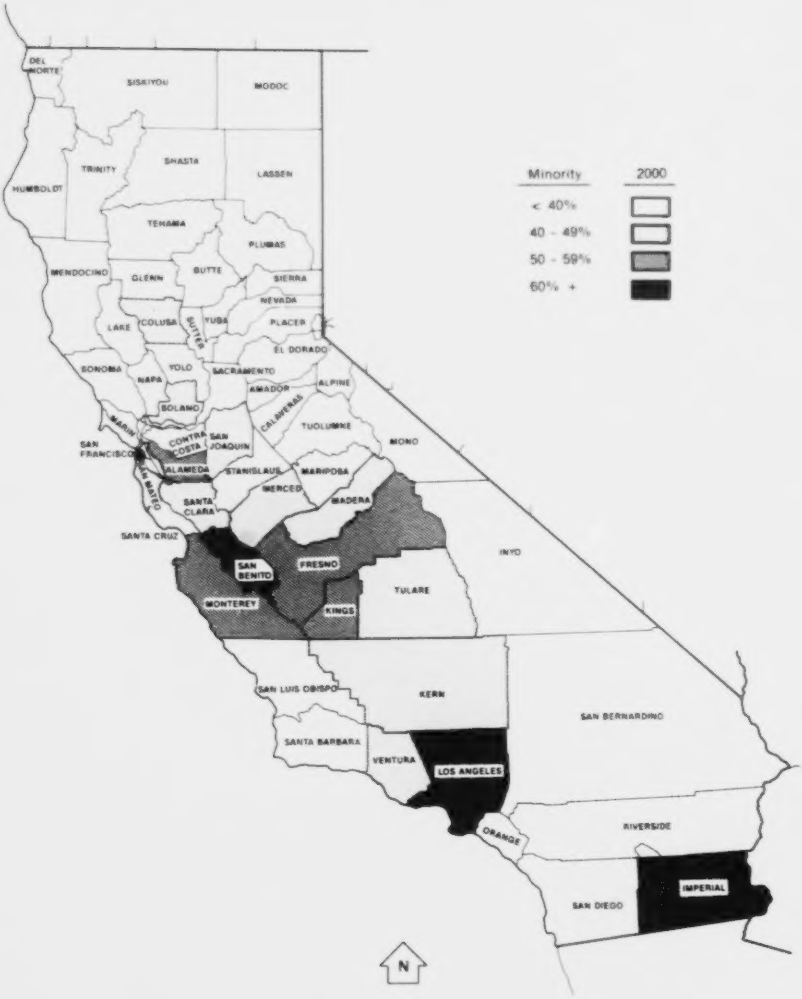
Map 4—Concentration of Hispanics by county, 2000



SOURCE: Based on projections by the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1987.

NOTE: Minorities includes Asians/other, Hispanics, and blacks.

Map 5—Concentration of minorities by county, 1985



SOURCE: Based on projections by the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, 1987.

NOTE: Minorities includes Asians/other, Hispanics, and blacks.

Map 6—Concentration of minorities by county, 2000

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